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THE
IRISH NECROMANCER.

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A NOVEL.

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-Street, London.

THE
IRISH NECROMANCER;

OR,
DEER PARK.

A Novel.



IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY THOMAS HENRY MARSHAL.

Love various minds does variously inspire;
He stirs in gentle natures gentle fire,
Like that of incense on the altars laid:
But raging flames tempestuous souls invade:
A fire which every windy passion blows,
With Pride it mounts, and with Revenge it glows.
DRYDEN.

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1821.

THE IRISH NECROMANCER.

CHAPTER I.

The unexpected Marriage.

“**I** TELL you what, sir James, there wont be such another deer park in all Christendom; even my lord Hornby’s will be nothing better than a grass-plot to it. By taking down the wall which divides Elmwood Park from the Grove, I shall have an extensive and beautiful range for the finest herd of deer that money can purchase. The house, which is tasteful and elegant, I intend to rail in, with as much of the shrubbery and lawn as will

make it ornamental to the park, and place in it my ranger and gamekeeper."

"But surely, my lord, you might enlarge your park without encroaching on the property of lady Isabel Montgomery?"

"No—I tell you no; the earl of Ellesmere, my late father-in-law, let every foot of land he had on long leases, except these two demesnes; and as to encroaching on her ladyship's property, I shall honestly pay her future husband, the marquis of Leverton, for every inch of it; I want no pecuniary compliments from any man."

"But will lady Isabel marry the marquis?"

"Marry him! why not, my lord the Raven?—the marquis is young, rich, and handsome, and so madly in love, he offers *cartes blanches* for settlements. I intend to take Isabel with me to London next week, and, in three months, I invite you, sir James Colville, to dance at her wedding. Little Bella was in a confounded hurry to leave Elmwood Castle after her father's

father's death, all owing to Solomon in petticoats—her cousin, Mrs. Maxwell. I do abominate that woman—she is as proud as Lucifer; I wish I could offend her high mightiness without vexing Isabel, who thinks her the *ne plus ultra* of perfection. I am now going to visit the fair ladies at the Grove, and before we meet again, sir James, I will contrive to quarrel with Minerva the wise, beyond all hope of reconciliation.”

“ It would be much more extraordinary,” thought sir James, “ if wisdom could be the friend, the associate of lord Coldbrook. What a pity that one of the most beautiful seats in Cumberland should be laid waste for such an idle whim! How much more to be lamented that this lovely young creature should be lured or forced into an union with the wild, the worthless marquis of Leverton!”

These reflections were disturbed by a message from the dean of R——, requesting to see sir James immediately; and the

young baronet instantly obeyed the summons of his much-respected friend, regardless of the wintry blast or the fast-falling snow, which robed with fantastic drapery each leafless tree.

Lord Coldbrook frequently stopped to contemplate his own unrivalled greatness in a deer park, nor once believed the hand of disappointment could blot out fancy's sketch. The appearance of Mr. Melross, chaplain to the late lord Ellesmere, riding down the avenue, as if he had just left the house, suddenly dissolved the charm of fancy's spell on the mind of lord Coldbrook.—“What brings that clerical coxcomb marauding about here?” thought the earl. “Leverton was always afraid of this silver-tongued adventurer; but when I get Isabel once to London, we will outplot the priest and the petticoat—Mrs. Maxwell and her favourite Melross.”

Lord Coldbrook, who really loved his sister-in-law, behaved to lady Isabel with the affection his heart dictated. His lordship

ship gently blamed her haste to leave Elmwood Castle, and mentioned the anxious wish of lady Coldbrook to see her sister in London.—“ I regret extremely, dearest Isabel, our house is not sufficiently large to accommodate any more of your people than your own woman,” and the earl fixed his eyes, with expressive meaning, on Mrs. Maxwell.

“ I fear, my lord, you cannot have the exclusive society of lady Isabel; for she is married, and cannot go; except indeed your lordship will kindly extend your invitation to her husband, Mr. Melross; three months ago, at the express desire of the late lord Ellesmere, I witnessed their union.”

To those unacquainted with the constitutional violence of lord Coldbrook's temper, uncurbed by education, and unsubdued by reason, his lordship must have appeared actuated by the delirium of insanity; language was exhausted in his abuse of Mrs. Maxwell—in the vengeance

he denounced against Mr. Melross ; and his lordship left the house, swearing he would break every bone in his clerical skin.

“ How fortunate,” said lady Isabel, “ the marriage of his cousin, Mr. Cleveland, will keep Melross from home these three days ! By that time I hope lord Coldbrook will be restored to rationality.”

“ Don’t expect impossibilities, child ; rational lord Coldbrook never was—rational lord Coldbrook will never be.”

“ It may be all a lie,” thought the earl, as he hurried on to Mount Hanover, the seat of sir James Colville—“ it may be all a lie of that d——d vixen Mrs. Maxwell, to amuse herself at my expence :” but when he heard sir James had been sent for by the dean of R——, his lordship cursed, in the bitterness of his soul, the coterie combined against him—sir James the most bitterly of all.

As lord Coldbrook proceeded on to Elmwood Castle, the village bells rung merrily
round,

round, bonfires were heaping on every side, and one was already blazing close by his castle gate.—“ It is for the marriage of Melross,” cried he, fiercely stamping on the earth; “ how shall I escape congratulation on this beggar’s wedding?” With frenzied violence lord Coldbrook ordered his carriage, and soon left far behind the village of R——, its merry bells and blazing bonfires.

Very different motives to those imputed to him by the earl, had carried sir James Colville to the deanery of R——: the good dean had for some time wished to establish in the village of R—— a school for educating the children of the poor, and, partly from his own private fortune, and partly from the contributions of the neighbouring gentry, had accumulated a fund sufficiently large to accomplish this humane purpose. As sir James had been a munificent benefactor, doctor Cleveland wished to shew him a plan he had just received from London for erect-

ing a schoolhouse, and to consult him on other affairs relative to the establishment. While they were thus employed, the village bells rung out a merry peal, and the dean, with much apparent anxiety, sent to inquire the cause.

The servant hastily returned. The bells were ringing for the marriage of Mr. Melross with lady Isabel Montgomery.

“What will lord Coldbrook think—what will lord Coldbrook say to this unexpected marriage?” said the wonder-looking sir James.

“It is very immaterial to me or mine what lord Coldbrook thinks on this or any other subject; not so lightly do I appreciate the good opinion of sir James Colville as to give it up, without a struggle, to the false representations of his lordship, who has invariably spoken of my nephew as an upstart and a beggar, though conscious, at the same moment, the noblest blood in England and Scotland circulates through the veins of Melross; and his
fortune

fortune is sufficiently large, not only for the comforts, but the elegancies of life. I am well aware lord Coldbrook will accuse my nephew with taking an unfair advantage of the age, and he will no doubt say, of the imbecility of lord Ellesmere—of the youth and inexperience of his daughter—to effect his union with lady Isabel Montgomery; but if you, my young friend, will give me a patient hearing, I trust I shall convince you the conduct of Melross on this, as on every other occasion, is free from blemish. As human, he is liable to err; but, whether his errors are those of the head or the heart, I have never yet been able to ascertain—I leave them to the magnifying optics of lord Coldbrook to find out. Do not accuse me of egotism, or, when I speak of my own family, of any other design than that of elucidating the conduct of lord Ellesmere in bestowing the hand of his daughter on my nephew; and when you have heard my simple statement, it will, I trust, secure your

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friendship

friendship for Melross, whose constant residence at the castle has permitted little intercourse between you since your coming to this country; and believe me, sir James, I set no trifling value on that man whose friendship I solicit for Melross."

Highly flattered by the confiding kindness of the dean, sir James made his acknowledgments with manly elegance, and doctor Cleveland commenced his self-allotted task.

"My father, when he married lady Jane Montgomery, aunt to the late lord Ellesmere, was esteemed one of the richest commoners in England. It would ill befit me, a servant of the church, a preacher of the Gospel, to rake up the ashes of the dead, the erring dead—my own father; suffice it to say, that at twenty-three I was the sole protector of an orphan sister, beauteous as the first rose of summer, ten years younger than myself. The inheritance of my fathers had passed into other hands, and the sons of affluence shunned the
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the children of adversity. In this hour of trial lord Ellesmere was my only friend—no other hand save his was stretched forth to assist me—no other voice save his poured the balm of consolation on my wounded spirit. By his advice, and consent to my own wishes (for who had I to rest upon but Heaven and him?) I took orders, and his lordship bestowed on me a living then in his gift, worth fourteen hundred pounds a-year; by his exertions also part of my inheritance, comparatively small indeed, was wrested from the profligate hands which had destroyed my father.

“ Lord Ellesmere remained unmarried till he was forty-six years old; he then began to reflect he was the last of his race, and I marvelled not a little when he communicated to me his intention of taking unto himself a wife, for the sole purpose, it should seem, of perpetuating the noble line of Montgomery. It was not for me to investigate the motives of my benefactor, but great indeed was my surprise

when I understood his choice was fixed upon my sportive Emma. Lord Ellesmere was possessed of many, many virtues; his heart was like pure gold, sterling and undefiled; but his person and manners were little calculated to secure the affections of a young beauty of sixteen, artless as lovely. She confessed the truth—she could not love him; yet still he lingered near her, still nourished hope, and basked in the smile, the sunny smile of Emma.

“In the honourable colonel Melross my sister found a mind—a form congenial to her own: he was then, what his son is now, all that man could admire, all that kindred angels could approve; and I fondly hoped, on the day of their union, that the page of happiness was opened fair, and without blot, to receive the names of Emma and Melross.

“Four years of happiness almost celestial passed over the heads of my darling Emma and her husband, when the regiment

ment of colonel Melross was ordered to Ireland, where he had many friends: the ship was cast away; two sailors only, saved almost by miracle, survived, to tell this tale of sorrow.

“Forgive me, my young friend,” continued the dean, as he perceived the emotion of sir James nearly equalled his own, “I did not mean to afflict you; I thought a lapse of twenty years had reconciled my mind to this event, once so deeply deplored, and that I could speak of it now as a fatal occurrence in another family; when, as I yet spake, the form of Emma rose to my mental view, lovely as when we parted, smiling through her tears on her happy husband, as he placed his cherub boy in my arms, kindly saying he would console me for their absence.

“Two years previous to this unhappy period, lord Ellesmere married lady Gertrude Mortimer, an indigent young woman, of noble family, and by her had two daughters. As Melross grew to manhood, he

he confided to me his intention of making him the husband of one of them, declaring at the same time he was free to choose—the son of Emma should be his on his own terms. Happily for him, lady Isabel was the chosen of his heart; for lord Coldbrook had so won on the affections of lady Gertrude, that a spell seemed to be cast around her, and she could see nothing but perfection in this most extraordinary-tempered man; and though lord Ellesmere consented to her marriage, he never approved her choice; yet it is but justice to say, lord Coldbrook is free from the many vices which disgrace our young nobility, and, generally speaking, is a moral man, and strictly honourable in all his dealings.

“The health of lady Ellesmere had been long declining; she survived the marriage of her daughter but six months. Her cousin Mrs. Maxwell, at the earnest entreaties of lady Isabel, took up her abode at Elmwood Castle; and when informed of lord Ellesmere’s intention with regard to my nephew,

nephew, she was pleased to say his choice reflected honour on his judgment. Elmwood, the princely seat of his lordship's ancestors, was to descend to his first-born, lady Gertrude; he therefore determined to enlarge the jointure-house of his mother, as the future residence of lady Isabel and her husband; and this magnificent habitation owes much of its present beauty to the superior taste of Mrs. Maxwell.

“ Melross had now attained the proper age for ordination, and I resigned to him the former gift of our mutual benefactor. From his father he inherits twenty thousand pounds, which his mother's portion and his faithful guardian's care have nearly doubled; and at my death he will heir all I possess. I mention this merely to prove Evremond Melross is only a beggar of lord Coldbrook's own making.

“ The chaplain of lord Ellesmere was suddenly translated to a better world, and his lordship desired my nephew would fill his station in the family till he became his
son,

son, which was to take place when lady Isabel had completed her eighteenth year, to which some months were yet wanting. It is unnecessary to say with what delight Melross became an inmate of the same habitation with his beloved.

“ A few days after this arrangement, lord Coldbrook arrived unexpectedly at the castle, and with him a good-looking young man, whom his lordship introduced as the marquis of Leverton. The unqualified admiration bestowed by the marquis on lady Isabel fully explained the motive of this visit; he had seen her at the house of lord Coldbrook, and his lordship seemed to evince, by his conduct, the certainty of success which awaited the wishes of his friend.

“ It was now October, yet the soft breath of summer still lingered on the autumnal breeze, and lord Ellesmere invited me to take our usual walk, to view the improvements around the future habitation of our children; and we prayed with thankful hearts

hearts to the great Disposer of all, that this little Eden might prove an earthly paradise to its future possessors. Fatigued with our ramble, we entered a Chinese arbour, shaded by bay and laurel, which completely screened us from casual observation. We were scarcely seated, when the voices of lord Coldbrook and his friend, in close consultation behind us, attracted our attention. I shall not pretend to give you a detail of the dialogue as it passed—the conversation of lord Coldbrook, as you must know, in a great measure consists in calling down imprecations on his own head, or that of others; and his breach of the third commandment is equally notorious and scandalous: I shall therefore merely give you the substance of this conversation, and the effect it produced on the conduct of lord Ellesmere.

“ Lord Hanby, a most eccentric oddity in this neighbourhood, has collected, at vast expence, from every quarter of the globe, every species of deer; and to make
room

room for these four-footed favourites, he has laid waste a hamlet on his estate, the inhabitants of which had grown into wealth and respectability under the guardian care of his father. This whim fastened on the fancy of lord Coldbrook, and he determined to outvie his rival oddity: the Grove was fixed upon as the future scene of rivalry, which the marquis promised he would resign to his friend whenever it came into his possession as the husband of lady Isabel Montgomery, and this beautiful demesne was to be converted into a deer park, and the house made a residence for his servants.

“The marquis now remarked Melross was a dangerous inmate in the same house with a young girl, who might be seduced into a private marriage with this clerical Adonis.—‘I wish to Heaven,’ cried my lord, with great violence, ‘old Squaretoes had popped off instead of gouty Syntax; but I will prevent this beggar’s wedding; he has been tutored no doubt by his specious

cious uncle to practise on the inexperience of the daughter, as he himself has imposed upon the imbecility and dotage of the father.' Many plans were formed, and as hastily rejected; at length it was determined that lady Coldbrook should come, the following week, to Elmwood Castle, and prevail on her father to part with lady Isabel for a short time; 'and then,' cried my lord, exultingly, 'you take her to Scotland, with or without her consent; hereafter she will gratefully acknowledge her escape from these rascally parsons.'

"They now agreed upon leaving Elmwood the next morning, to make the necessary arrangements for this Scottish journey.

"At dinner, the next day, lord Ellesmere behaved with his usual serenity of manner, and excused the absence of Melross, by saying he had sent him on particular business to London. When the ladies had retired, and I was left alone with the earl, he remarked the shield of integrity

grity and honour was not always equal to repel the shafts of insolence and malice.—
‘ But I have endeavoured to counteract the plans of these insolent young men—I have written by Melross to my confidential friend, the bishop of ———, now in London, to procure me a special licence, and Melross, on his return, shall become the husband of Isabel : I am also resolved this marriage shall be kept secret till the Grove is ready for their reception. Melross, as the husband of my daughter, shall appear to the world independent, as he really is; and I am well convinced that his own house is the only security he can have from the insulting violence of that most extraordinary man, lord Coldbrook.’

“ Three days after this conversation the marriage of Melross took place, and we heard with infinite satisfaction that the marquis of Leverton had gone to a distant part of the kingdom, to take possession of an estate left him by a near relation.

“ The Grove was now ready to receive
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the youthful pair. A fortnight was yet wanting to complete the eighteenth year of lady Isabel, and lord Ellesmere had fixed on her natal day to announce to his assembled friends the marriage of his daughter with Melross. But who shall say the coming hour is mine?—two days before the allotted time he expired on the bosom of Emma's child. Lady Isabel removed to her splendid, though melancholy home, but filial piety forbade the bridal garland to decorate the bier of their deeply-lamented father; and as the tomb closed over my departed friend, I felt that two links only remained of that chain which bound me to earth.

“Indecorous, indecent I might say, was the conduct of lord Coldbrook and his friend on our late lamented loss, and the marquis has already commenced the most splendid preparations for his nuptials with lady Isabel. A trusty friend gave me notice of the intended visit of lord Coldbrook to
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to Elmwood Castle, and I secretly rejoiced that Melross was obliged to be absent from his own home at this period. Mrs. Maxwell imposed upon herself the task of undeceiving the self-deluded earl, but in what manner I am yet to learn. And now, my esteemed young friend, if I have too severely tried that patience which I bespoke at the commencement of my simple story, let the anxiety I feel to clear the fair fame of Melross from the aspersions thrown on it by that misguided man, lord Coldbrook, united with the wish to secure for him your much-valued friendship and esteem, plead my apology."

All that genuine feeling could dictate, all that elegant language could express, combined in the acknowledgments made by sir James Colville to the exemplary dean of R——, and, mutually pleased, and with increased esteem, they parted. On the return of Mr. Melross, sir James went with doctor Cleveland to the Grove,
and

and the friendship so ardently wished for by the dean of R——, ended only with the lives of these amiable young men.

Sir James had promised his sister, lady Milwood, to spend some time with her that winter in London, and a third letter had arrived, chiding his unusual delay, before the baronet could separate from his friends at the Grove. At parting, he offered his best services to effect a reconciliation between them and lord Coldbrook.

“Spare yourself the Herculean labour, my good friend,” said Mrs. Maxwell; “you might as well expect to move this house to Nova Scotia, as to change an opinion once formed by lord Coldbrook. He detests every individual in this family, except lady Isabel; and her marriage, and his lordship’s disappointed whim, will be an insuperable barrier to a reconciliation.”

Sir James determined, though the general voice was in favour of Mrs. Maxwell, to try his persuasive powers on lord Coldbrook,

Coldbrook, and, the day after his arrival in London, called on his lordship. Sir James was received by the earl with sullen civility, who abruptly asked him what carried him to the deanery of R—— the morning he was blazed and belled out of Elmwood? When sir James explained the motive of his journey thither, the face of lord Coldbrook brightened into good-humour; he took the hand of sir James with great cordiality, declaring he was happy to find the baronet had not joined that infernal coterie against him.

Sir James now endeavoured to extenuate the conduct of Melross and his uncle. —“Don’t tell me,” cried his lordship, with great vehemence, “of lord Ellesmere having any wish, any will but that of your old charity-monger, the dean; charity began at home with him, when he secured the prettiest girl in England, with ten thousand a-year, to his silver-tongued nephew. It sets me half-mad to think this beggar’s bride might have been marchio-
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ness of Leverton. Forget and forgive!—no, d——n me if I do! and I would give five thousand pounds to see madam Maxwell march after a cart's tail through the streets of London—the meddling Jezebel! the Hecate of Pandemonium!—Poor little Bella! the love I bear her prevents me from raising such a hurricane around the head of Melross as would blow his clerical curls to the devil. If you wish to preserve my regard, sir James, speak of these people no more; my resolution is taken, and is immutable as the laws of the Medes and Persians; I will not seek them—let them not seek me.”

On his return home, the countenance of sir James betrayed his ill success.—“I knew how it would be,” said lord Milwood—“you might as well expect a Latin oration from a jackass, as rationality from lord Coldbrook. Melross ought to rejoice at the aversion which prevents his being a daily witness to the tormenting absurdity of his lordship's conduct.”

A week passed over, and sir James heard nothing of lord Coldbrook, till one evening he went with lord and lady Milwood, and a large party of their friends, to the theatre. They were scarcely seated, when lord Coldbrook suddenly entered, and placed himself close beside the baronet.—“This is a devilish snug corner—just what I wanted—to see, without being seen. Look yonder; Hecate has waved her wand, and, *presto!* the whole noble family of Melross have made their appearance *in propria persona*, to prove the nobility of their kinsman’s clan: ay, madam Maxwell, there you are—princess of mischief and impertinence; and, faith! little Bella looks like the princess of the Diamond Mine.”

Sir James now beheld with real pleasure the family party of the Grove in an opposite box, accompanied by a number of friends, splendidly dressed and uncommonly elegant in their appearance.—“Who is that dignified and very hand-

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some young man speaking to Mrs. Maxwell?"

"Young man!—that's a good one, faith!—why he was class-fellow with my father at Eton! But he is a gifted man—the blessing of the wizard is upon him; baron Melross was a noted warlock. It happened with him, as it generally does with these kind of gentry, though they can bestow wealth, power, and all the agreeabilities of life on their favourites, they continue themselves as poor as the devil their master; and so it was with my lord baron, the wizard. The heir of Greythorn was immensely rich, and he set his contraptions to catch him; the spell worked well—he fell in love with the eldest daughter, portioned off the second, bought an estate for the eldest son, and married the youngest to his cousin, a rich city heiress; and in return, by way of a portion with his wizard bride, the old warlock bestowed on him the gift of ever-blooming youth for four generations to come; and it is generally

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rally believed he bequeathed him his wand and his magical library."

"Take care, my lord, how you give publicity to this tale of scandal; the families of Greythorn and Melross are not to be traduced, or sported with, by every idle tongue, with impunity."

"I don't care a d——n about them; Leverton told me the whole story, and pointed them all out to me at Edinburgh last year; but we took special care to avoid the wizard glen, and to keep clear of the wizard's family."

"The hoaxing abilities of the marquis require no comment; it is a pity he applies his talents so unworthily. Be advised, and don't embroil yourself with two noble families, by repeating this scandalous fable."

"Let him go on," said lord Milwood, softly; "don't embroil yourself with such an idiot, who may quarrel with you merely for want of understanding."

Sir James felt the truth of this observation,

tion, and turned from his lordship to look at the Melross family. A change had taken place in the situation of some of the party, and a young girl, lovely as the fabled Houri, was now seated by lady Isabel. Sir James, in the anxiety to know who she was, forgot his own anger and the absurdity which had caused it, and asked lord Coldbrook the name of this beauty among beauties.

“A wierd daughter of the Glen, brought hither no doubt to spread her magic web to catch some silly buz-fly of fortune, and you are the first fool that offers. Come along, come out of the house—come out of the house, I say; or curse me but I will raise such an uproar as will get us turned out in good earnest.”

Apprehensive of incurring the penalty due to such intolerant behaviour, sir James left the box in moody silence, while his lordship, wiping the perspiration from his forehead, swore he had saved

him from witchcraft by the sweat of his brow.

Some gentlemen, who had observed the violent gestures and heard the loud voice of lord Coldbrook, concluded that, in one of his usual fits of absurdity, he had fastened a quarrel on the generally esteemed young baronet, and followed them into the lobby of the theatre, in order to prevent any mischief that might ensue. One of them, a near relative of sir James, stepped forward, and requested he might be allowed to adjust any little difference of opinion which seemingly had occurred between them, then whispered sir James—
“ I thought you had more sense, Colville, than to put your understanding in competition with that ridiculous oddity, whose conduct is regulated by whim, and whose manners are a pest to society.”

Lord Coldbrook looked on this well-intentioned peacemaker with great sternness, and then exclaimed—“ Who the
devil

devil wants your interference, my lord Longshanks? or who told you we differed in opinion, ninny-compoop, that you stand whispering there, sawing the air with your arms, like a windmill?"

Mr. Lacelles, who seemed not to hear one word of this angry address, continued speaking to sir James—"If you have no quarrel with this savage, what made him haul you out with the ferocity of a bulldog, and make such an uproar?"

"Pure goodwill; but the cause is too ridiculous to relate."

"As you have no affair of honour on your hands," said Mr. Lacelles, in his usual manner, "come back with us; I hear the voice of Squalletta, who has just commenced her very best song."

"Go back!—no, d——n the fool!—What! to be bewitched?"

"Bewitched!" repeated all the young men at once.

"*You* may all return without any danger," said lord Coldbrook, with great bit-

terness; "the little witch has more good sense than to cast her cantraps to catch any of *you*."

Sir James, in an agony of vexation, seized the arm of his friendly tormentor, and hurried into the street, while Mr. Lancelles, scarcely less angry than his cousin, declared the absurdity and impertinence of that savage oddity ought to preclude him from all civilized society.

It may not be unpleasant to give some account of the Melross family before we introduce them to sir James, who determined, in bold defiance to the warning voice of lord Coldbrook, to call on his Cumberland friends the next morning, not without hope of meeting the witching daughter of the Glén.

CHAPTER II.

*The Wizard's Glen.*

It is not our intention to give a laboured detail of the feudal greatness, the wide-extended domains, or the princely revenues of these once-powerful barons; it is equally unnecessary to prove whether, by civil war, party feuds, or private extravagance, they were reduced to comparative indigence and quiet obscurity; but the name of Melross descended with unsullied honour, untarnished by treachery or treason. Those who are fond of cloud-capt towers, fortified castles, or picturesque ruins falling to decay, must be of necessity disappointed, for we regret no vestige remained to be described, in the present family of Melross, of tower, battlement,

or bastion ; their towers and towns, with the lands on which they stood, had, by necessity or force, become the property of other masters. The present estate, worth little more than eight hundred pounds a-year, formed no part of their original inheritance ; it was bequeathed to the late baron by a relation, who had protected his orphan infancy, his father having, before his death, dissipated the last remnant of their once-splendid patrimony ; and this estate was so firmly entailed, that no chicanery of law could dissever it from the title. No legendary tale of horror was attached to the spacious and stately mansion, which was neither placed by the side of a heathy mountain, whose lofty summit, capped by cloud and vapour, cast a shade of gloomy grandeur on the vale beneath—or embosomed in some Highland glen, rich in all the beauty of luxuriant wildness, which required a Highland guide and Highland courage to approach.

Glenfillan Place, the residence of lord
Melross,

Melross, or, as it was more generally called, the Glen, was situated within ten miles of Edinburgh; and here, without a sigh given to the former greatness of his ancestors, the unambitious baron enjoyed the blessings of domestic harmony—of wedded love; and the first real affliction lord Melross or his children ever experienced, was the loss of his amiable baroness; she died when her eldest son had nearly completed his nineteenth year.

Evremond Melross possessed great energy of character—a solid and highly-cultivated understanding; his manners were full of native grace and sweetness, and his gay and happy heart overflowed with the milk of human kindness: a philanthropic observer could only regret in Evremond Melross, that his fortune was not as ample as his heart. Archibald, a year younger than his brother, possessed equal attraction of manner, equal goodness of heart. Two gentle little girls, the eldest thirteen years old, the petted darlings of their fa-

ther and brothers, completed the family of the widowed baron, if we except Mr. Mackenzie, the friend, the beloved of all. This gentleman had been taken, at three years old, by a rich relation, who lived in England, to educate as sole heir of all his wealth; and in this firstborn of the Graces was combined all that polished elegance could give, all that science could bestow.

With the fervid enthusiasm of first attachment, Mackenzie placed his affections on a young lady of inferior rank and fortune, but so transcendently lovely, so highly gifted by nature and education, as to secure her empire over the unsophisticated heart of her lover. With difficulty his guardian friend was prevailed upon to see this syren before he negatived their union for ever; the fair Maria not only conquered his repugnance, but enslaved his heart; and, three weeks after their first interview, became his wife.

Without comment or complaint, the heart-broken Frederick Mackenzie left the kingdom,

kingdom, and returned to his native Scotland. His father had left him five hundred pounds to buy a mourning ring, and believing him nobly provided for, had bequeathed the entire of his fortune to his youngest son. This sum was now all the worldly wealth of Frederick Mackenzie, and he determined to go to India, whether to make a fortune, or to lose his life, it mattered not. Baron Melross was present by accident when he applied for this legacy : the iron features of his brother did not relax at his briefly-told tale of woe ; he paid the unequal portion of his brother, took a proper release, and then lamented an engagement at Edinburgh would deprive him of his dear Frederick's society while he remained in Scotland, which the rich Mackenzie supposed would be only a few days.

The cheek of Frederick Mackenzie could not grow paler—his eye more sad or heavy ; but a sigh so expressive of hopeless anguish broke from his tortured bosom,

som, as wrung with sympathetic grief the heart of the benevolent baron.—“ Kinsman,” said his lordship, presenting his hand, “ I take it unkindly and unkinsman-like, your making no inquiry after your cousin Amabel, your mother’s own niece. But we will not part till you have spent some time with us at Glenfillan Place; our little boys will cheer you, and Amabel and I will do our very best to please you. You need not hurry, cousin Frederick, to seek savages in India or America; I am grieved to say we have them amongst us here, even at our own doors;” and the baron cast a look of bitter reproach at the rich Mackenzie.

The tears that blighted happiness and blasted hope had failed to draw forth, now fell in torrents down the pallid cheeks of Mackenzie at the voice of kindness.

“ Poor boy!” thought the baron, as he walked in silence by his side, “ how grievous it is to see him weep so bitterly! But it will ease his heart, and do him good,”

good," unconscious that the big drops of sympathy rolled over his own benevolent countenance.

Soothed by the gentle courtesies, the affectionate tenderness of his friends at Glenfillan Place, the tranquillity of Mr. Mackenzie was in some degree restored, and with returning strength of mind the wish of independence again returned, and he again determined to seek it in a foreign country; when the sister of him who had destroyed his peace, and blighted his first visions of hope and joy, died, and left him a life-annuity of three hundred pounds, as a trifling act of retribution for the unjust and cruel conduct of her brother.

With heartfelt satisfaction the inhabitants of the Glen heard his determination of remaining among them; but the face of the baron clouded when Mr. Mackenzie mentioned pecuniary recompence.—“God-sake, what does it signify between relations?” cried he, with great quickness; “what a stranger is welcome to should make

make no clash between us, cousin Frederick."

Mr. Mackenzie took occasion to remark that a growing family required great economy to provide for their future establishment.

"If you mean by economy, that I should turn the hungry and the naked from my door without relief, it is a southern creed the heart of a Melross could never yet understand. My little girls have already all the beauty and sweetness of their mother. She was not ill mated, and I required no better portion. Archibald must go to the wars, as his forefathers have done, and Evremond be content with the fortune I now enjoy, which neither of us can lessen."

Every pecuniary arrangement was at length made to the satisfaction of Mr. Mackenzie on his own part, but he felt with regret that the future fate of his young relatives must depend in a great measure on that time and chance which happeneth.

happeneth to all men. The education of the brothers became his peculiar care, and the virtues and the graces, which grew with their growth, and strengthened with their strength, was not only the reward of his labour, but the pride, the pleasure of his existence.

“We shall have another snowdrop of the Glen,” remarked the baron; “our little Amabel grows every day more like my sister Annie.”

“Poor Annie!” sighed lady Melross, softly, and her eyes filled with tears, “I thought she was rich.”

“Annie!” said Evremond, surprised at the unusual emotion of his mother.

“Another time, my son,” and her ladyship looked at the baron as if unwilling he should hear them.

Lord Melross soon after left the room, and Evremond renewed his inquiry why the name of his aunt Mordaunt seemed always to distress her—“My father, on the contrary, speaks of her as rich and happy.”

“Rich

“Rich she is, but not happy, Evremond. At sixteen she married Mr. Mordaunt; his haughty bearing, his lordly manner, but ill accorded with the gentle sweetness of my sister, and I earnestly entreated her to reject this man of wealth and pride. Her answer was, why should she continue to burthen her brother, or disappoint his high-raised hopes of greatness for her? Greatness she would herself forego, oh! how freely!—but in the fraternal bosom of her brother she never would implant the thorn of disappointment. Our beautiful Annie left her peaceful home, to seek for other kindred in another land, and took with her only one faithful attendant, who returned home weeks after, to tell our cherished Annie, our snowdrop of the Glen, was mated to splendid misery. This polished southern savage, Mr. Mordaunt, not content with unceasingly wounding the feelings of his patient victim, by his unmanly, insulting remarks on her kindred and her country, at length became
jealous

jealous of poor Annie's affection for this her humble friend, and banished her with ignominy from his house, declaring, in the gross terms of unbridled rage, of tyrannic power, one Scotch beggar was quite sufficient to support in idle state. I could depend upon this faithful creature, and determined the baron should never hear from her the hard fate of our gentle sister; for why should I plant a thorn in that guileless bosom which Annie sacrificed her peace to please? We frequently receive letters from England, written with such amiable art as to deceive the baron into a belief of his sister's perfect happiness; but I, who know the sad reality of all she suffers with this man of wealth and pride, mingle the tear of sisterly regret with that of maternal anguish, when I reflect my own portionless snowdrops may meet a fate as splendid and as wretched."

"Never will I marry—never, so help me, Heaven, as I keep this vow!" said
Evremond.

Evremond, while all the energy of his character sparkled in his eyes, "until my sisters are provided for as the daughters of Melross should be, or till I can secure them that independence which will release me from this vow, now registered in heaven and my own heart."

"And I," cried Archibald, with equal energy, "swear to devote the first gifts of fortune, the first spoils of war, to the same fraternal purpose; the same recording register will answer for us both."

"Have you formed any plan yet," said Mr. Mackenzie, half-jestingly, to his favourite Evremond, a few mornings after this conversation, "to secure that independence to your sisters you have so solemnly promised?"

"I have promised to remain unmarried till I could do so," replied Evremond, evidently piqued at the manner of Mackenzie's address. "I am no wild theorist, nor do I expect to recover the purse of Fortunatus from the flames which burned it

it so many centuries ago: what economy and persevering industry can do, I am ready to perform; and I expected advice and assistance, not ridicule, from Mr. Mackenzie."

"Mistake me not, dearest Evremond, or suppose even for a moment that I could ridicule or wound those feelings which do so much honour to your heart. I only wish to know in what shape fancy has presented this promised independence to your imagination; for, to confess the truth, I have been treading the visionary vale with giant strides this entire morning, and have already, in idea, not only secured our little girls from the splendid misery of your aunt Mordaunt, but joined to the very limited inheritance of Melross every foot of land that could be purchased in the neighbourhood of Glenfillan; unless you, Evremond, guided by a false pride, should demolish my air-built castles by refusing to assist me."

"Oh! name the means, my best, my
earliest

earliest friend. I dread nothing but dishonour; labour will be pastime. Forgive my petulant ill-humour, and try and trust me."

"I have observed," said Mr. Mackenzie, smiling at the energy he so much admired, "that your father's steward has grown into wealth, while the land is impoverished, the cattle ill fed, and lord Melross finds his rents badly paid, and his tenants discontented; the fault must be somewhere, and I took great pains to investigate the cause, and prove to the baron, not without some difficulty, his favourite Macbrier was a very great rogue. I propose to take this arduous task upon myself, provided you and Archibald will assist me; I intend not only to claim the salary, but the land occupied by the present steward, which we will dispose of to the best advantage, by cropping it every year—the produce forming a little fund annually, I should hope increasing, for the future benefit of our little girls; and
for

for you, Evremond, hope formed the certainty of increasing wealth through the medium of honourable industry. I expect some resistance on the part of my lord the baron, which I make no doubt to overcome. And now, my dear Evremond, shall we, or shall we not, adventure this Herculean labour?"

"Oh! call it not labour—call it the recreation of the heart—the happy vision of independence, that may on some future day be realized to my sisters, and my heart will ever worship the friend who has not only pointed out the means, but secured the power of acting."

"You are quite too high-flown for a delver of dikes. Remember, Evremond, we must all work here; the land is in sad order, for the master's eye has been wanting; and I have got some books from Edinburgh, which it will be necessary for us to study before we commence experimental farmers."

The exertions of the amiable Mackenzie

zie and his juvenile associates were successful beyond their most sanguine expectations, and the mine of wealth seemed gradually opening to reward the efforts of persevering industry.

The death of lady Melross was followed by that of Mr. Mordaunt, who, true to his tyrannic principles even in death, left his widow independent only while she remained unmarried; her annuity of seven hundred pounds was to become the property of a distant relation, if Mrs. Mordaunt made a second choice.

With as much joy as he could now feel, lord Melross heard the fair Annie's intention of returning to her native country, and her young relatives gave her the meeting twenty miles from Glenfillan Place. Mrs. Mordaunt felt somewhat dismayed at the fervent embrace of two elegant young men, who pressed their ruby lips to hers with fond affection.—“Can these be,” she said, “the two little boys I left ten years ago at the Glen?”

“Even

“Even so, my own aunt Annie,” replied Evremond; “and you too are the very same—my father’s own cherished snowdrop.”

Mrs. Mordaunt expected to meet beauty, for all the Melross family were handsome; but she did not expect to meet that attraction of manners so much easier felt than described—that dignity mingled with sweetness—or the numberless graces displayed in every look and motion of her youthful kinsmen.

“If my poor Amabel had lived to see this day!” said the greatly-agitated baron, as he pressed this much-loved sister to his bosom—“but His will be done, who gives and who takes away. Welcome, my Annie, to the heart of your brother; welcome to your kindred and your native land.”

When his emotions were in some degree subsided, lord Melross took the hand of his sister.—“I must make you acquainted, my own Annie, with the first

friend of my heart—with my cousin Mackenzie.”

Mrs. Mordaunt, who supposed this friend of her brother's some man of middle age, rose to receive him; but the mingled blush of modesty and surprise mantled on her cheek, when the sparkling eyes of Mr. Mackenzie met those of the beautiful widow—when she saw in him all those polished graces, the reflected lustre of which she had so much admired in her nephews. Mr. Mackenzie was but twenty when he left England, religion had taught him resignation, and the early visions of love, and the bitterness of disappointment, had equally faded from his mind; his young associates had lured him into happiness; he joined their harmless frolics, mingled in their healthful sports, and the man of twenty-nine looked as gay and happy as the stripling of nineteen.

“When does Archibald go to the wars?” said Mrs. Mordaunt, some weeks after her
return

return to Glenfillan, "for that I find is to be his future destination."

"Time enough," said the baron—"time enough yet, Annie; I see no hurry for his leaving home this many-a-day to come."

"But how do you intend to get him into the army?" continued the persevering Mrs. Mordaunt; "the times are long past since a Melross headed his own army, paid his own soldiers, and could head and hang at pleasure. How, my dear brother, is Archibald to get his commission—by gift or purchase?"

"Godsake, Annie," cried the baron, with that quickness which always denoted his being vexed or angry, "say no more about it—time enough to think of it ten years hence; why he is little better than a schoolboy yet."

"I find I have been premature in my wish to serve him," said Mrs. Mordaunt, with much gravity; "I may return this commission, which one of Mr. Mordaunt's
D 2 friends

friends was so kind as to ask and obtain for my nephew."

"I am very much obliged to your friend, and very much obliged to you too, my own Annie," said the greatly-subdued baron; "and if I must part with Archibald, I must; though, God knows, I have neither money nor inclination to do it of my own accord."

"Take my advice, Archy," said Mrs. Mordaunt, the day before that appointed for his departure, "shew your first proof of good generalship by making a prudent retreat, without taking a formal leave of your family; it will break the hearts of the poor little girls, and Evremond and Mackenzie will be dull as a muffled drum—it will wring the heartstrings of your father with useless agony, and I shall be moped to death in such humdrum society."

"Would my aunt advise me," said the glowing Archibald, "to leave the paternal
roof

roof for the first time, without a father's blessing on my head—without the fraternal embrace—without a sister's kiss?—no, never; my best beloved Mackenzie would despise me for deserting this first post of honour, and I should despise myself, as a deserter from the cause of filial duty and fraternal love.”

“Enthusiast,” said the admiring aunt, “how I grieve you should ever encounter a world beyond your native home!”

CHAPTER III.

The Orator.

“THIS is the first gift of fortune,” said Archibald Melross, as he received two thousand pounds bequeathed him by the relation he was named after; “the spoils of war have yet to come,” as he was writ-

ing to his brother, requesting to know whether he would have this money remitted to Scotland, or placed in the English funds, for the use of his sisters.

Captain Harvey called on him; as this gentleman held, next to his own family, the first place in the estimation of the young soldier, he mentioned his good fortune, and the destination of his legacy.

“The family specimen is so alluring, I should like to go a-wooing to the Glen. How old are your sisters, Archy?”

“Oh! mere children,” forgetful at the moment he had not seen them for two years, and that Amabel was now more than fifteen.

“Well, I must only live in hope; at twenty-one I can wait half-a-dozen years, without danger of decrepitude.”

The servant now announced Mr. Seymour; and a middle-aged man, very full dressed, made his appearance: his figure was short, square, and rather corpulent; his round ruddy face bespoke the fulness
of

of content. Mr. Seymour walked up the room with the erect steadiness of a drill-serjeant upon duty, and stopped exactly opposite to Melross; he then waved his hand, flourished his feet, and made three distinct bows.—“ I have the superlative honour to address the honourable Mr. Melross.”

Archibald bowed, uncertain whether he should not return an equal number with his visitor, who, placing one hand on his bosom, and flourishing away with the other, commenced the following harangue: —“ The obligations—the heavy debt of gratitude I owe you, most honourable young gentleman, are far beyond my feeble powers of oratory to express; but they are engraven on my heart with the burning pen of gratitude, which the icy hand of death can only obliterate. You have, most honourable, most elegant young gentleman,” and Mr. Seymour fixed his admiring eyes on the astonished Archibald, “ gladdened a father’s heart—over-

flowed his cup with joy and thankfulness, by rescuing his only child from almost-certain destruction—a daughter dear to his heart, as the oriental pearl to the diver—precious to his soul, as the mines of Golconda and Peru, or the golden sands of Africa. I want words.”

“ I am very glad to hear it,” said captain Harvey, advancing, “ for I want to know if little Ellen has got her back broke, and is now a lady in her own right.”

“ She is as much a lady in her own right as you are a gentleman,” cried the highly-incensed orator; “ her mother was an honourable, and my Ellen has as much right to call the earl of Greythorn uncle as yourself. Your father, my lamented brother-in law, the honourable Mr. Harvey, was the finest orator and the finest gentleman of his day; while you, if you have any abilities, employ them to torment and worry all belonging to you.”

“ All owing,” said the provoking Harvey,
vey,

vey, "to the citizen puddle which commingles with the pure stream of nobility in my veins.—But tell me, Melross, was it out of a horse-pond, a dry ditch, or a broken-down carriage, you rescued the distressed damsel?"

"Yesterday, in the Park, I had the good fortune to seize the reins of a young lady's horse that was running with great speed, and felt happy in restoring her unhurt to her friends; and if I have gladdened the heart of her father," adopting the style he thought would please, "my own glows with the throb of responsive sympathy."

"Hear him! hear him!" cried the exulting Mr. Seymour; "just so your father would have spoken; but you are no more like him than I to Hercules; and, with all your self-conceit, Mr. Augustus Harvey, you are no more to be compared to my honourable friend now present, than a hen's feather is like the rich plumage of his helmet."

“ I think you had better try and prevail on Mr. Melross to exhibit his plumage in your drawing-room to-morrow; my-most honoured uncle, as you may want a nobility-staff to lean upon; for I am determined, after so much abuse, not to punish myself by looking at greasy aldermen, fubsy dowagers, with citizen miss and citizen master caricaturing gentility, and looking hideously agreeable to gratify you.”

“ Did ever mortal hear the like?” cried Mr. Seymour; “ as I am a living sinner, this boy’s enough to drive me mad. I keep no dirty company, and if the honourable Mr. Melross will condescend to come at so short a notice, he will find the caricaturing is all on your own side, Mr. Augustus Harvey.”

“ Oh go, by all means,” cried Harvey, eagerly, who had now accomplished his purpose of getting Melross introduced at his uncle’s—“ go, and see the lord mayor and sheriffs in all their glory; I wish you
much

much joy of the amusement the whole curious set will afford you—the scene will at least have novelty to recommend it.”

“ I shall feel great pleasure,” said the conciliating Archibald, “ to be the guest of Mr. Seymour, and esteem it an honour to be numbered among his friends.”

“ And you will come too, wont you, Augustus ?” said Mr. Seymour, in a tone of entreaty. “ I did not mean to vex you ; and you know, Augustus, you would provoke a saint when you set about it.”

Harmony was at length restored, and the mirthful Harvey consented to accompany his friend the next day, merely to prove the truth of his uncle’s brilliant metaphor—the rich plume and the hen’s feather.

Mr. Seymour now bowed, and flourished himself off in high good-humour, and Archibald began to lecture the mirth-loving Harvey.

“ No prosing, Archy—I detest it as much as I admire your own faultless conduct ;;

duct; and that uncle of mine, when he begins to speechify, is enough to set the patience of Job at defiance. My father, brother to the present earl of Greythorn, was esteemed one of the best speakers in the British parliament; his periods were finely rounded, and sense and eloquence combined in his flowing language. When he married Miss Seymour, worth half a plum, who lived from her infancy with her godmother, my father's aunt, the delight of her brother nearly outstepped the bounds of sanity; nobility-mad he certainly is; and now the flowing oratory of my father fastened on his brain, and he would be an orator; studying tropes and metaphors without end; Mr. Seymour became the admiration of Guildhall: his speeches had one great advantage, few could controvert, for few could understand them, and he flourishes to this day a city speaker of renown. A niece of lord Greythorn's preferred independence with a city merchant to dependence among lords

lords and ladies, and the silvery sounds of the honourable Mrs. Seymour fully compensated for her want of fortune. Mr. Seymour placed his bride in one of the best houses in Harley-street, and she received his city friends with great good-humour. My uncle has been a widower four years, and his only child, his idolized Ellen, whom you have seen, is the reputed heiress of two hundred thousand pounds, and the actual possessor of twenty thousand left by her grandmother."

"I must acknowledge my want of gallantry, for I really did not look at the lady. I had the good fortune to assist: her friends grouped round her almost instantly, and finding I could be no longer useful, I made my best bow; and am not a little surprised how her father found me out."

"Some of her companions told him, I suppose, you were the son of a lord, and he could do no less than make a speech on the occasion. We must go early to-morrow,

The next morning the earl was so unusually warm in his praise, that Harvey confessed the first wish of his heart was to see him the husband of Ellen Seymour.

“What man of noble birth,” said the lofty earl, “would wish to be connected with that speech-crazed man, her father? Sir John Freeman told me, before he left England, he went to escape the fascinating loveliness of your cousin. The absurdity of her father no man of sense could endure; no man of rank could introduce him among his associates, without danger of sharing the ridicule he takes so much pains to excite. When I have endeavoured to negotiate an alliance, even where I knew money was not only acceptable but necessary, I have been silenced by some ridiculous remark on the citizen-speaker; and I despair of ever seeing my poor Ellen married in the rank she now moves in, as my relation. Melross is well suited to win a lady’s love, and if you should find him less fastidious than those I have encountered,

countered, his want of fortune can be of no consequence where hers is so abundant. But we must act with caution. Melross possesses all that dignity of high-souled pride which shuns obligation: I know him well; anxious to ascertain the conduct of him who held such unbounded sway over the mind of my fondest hope, I had every motion watched, every action investigated, and well he bore the scrutiny—the proudest father might boast to call him son, and it would be my pride, my boast, to call him the husband of my darling Ellen.”

Harvey felt at this moment ready to worship his uncle, and he expressed his sentiments with such glowing ardour, that lord Greythorn gaily told him the family mania was upon him.

Miss Seymour chiefly resided with her uncle since the death of her mother, and by the skilful management of Harvey, Melross was seldom absent from Berkley-square; and in two months it was difficult
to

to decide which was most in love—the young soldier or the city heiress. This day-dream of bliss was disturbed by the appearance of Mr. Seymour one morning at lord Greythorn's; head, hands, and feet, flourished in joyous unison, and his look and manner were unusually consequential; as he asked for his little Ellen. Miss Seymour had gone with lady Greythorn to visit a sick friend.—“How unfortunate!” said Mr. Seymour, sporting one of his best attitudes; “I wanted Ellen to choose her wedding jewels, and buy her wedding clothes.”

Harvey took the arm of his friend, whose varying countenance betrayed the feelings of his heart, and left the room. The cold dew of agony rested on the brow of Melross, and he looked the image of despair: in this moment of anguish Augustus lured from him the secret of his heart—his unbounded love for Ellen Seymour. This confession had scarcely passed his lips, when lord Greythorn joined them:

“Who

“ Who has my delectable uncle chosen for his future son-in-law ?” said Harvey.

“ The seducer of innocence,” replied his lordship, sternly—“ the gambler—the dissipated profligate—the unprincipled earl of Thornby.”

“ Merciful Heaven !” cried the agonized Melross, “ is this man to become the husband of the spotless Ellen ?”

Lord Greythorn took his hand, and with impressive solemnity asked if he had sufficient love for Ellen Seymour, sufficient friendship for her family, to avert from them this threatened misery, this deathblow to their happiness ?

“ Name the means, my lord ; my best blood would seal their peace—oh, how willingly !”

“ I want no such sanguinary proof of regard ; consent, dearest Archibald, to become the husband of my Ellen ; my carriage shall convey you to Scotland, my nephew be the companion of your journey.”

For

For a moment the countenance of Melross was radiant with love, hope, and joy ; suddenly a death-pang seized his heart, and he sunk fainting on the sofa by which he stood.—“ My father, my brother,” he almost convulsively exclaimed—“ they may believe me a mercenary deceiver—that I have stolen a wealthy heiress from her father—that in me the hitherto-unsullied name of Melross is tarnished by dishonour. Ellen ! dearest Ellen ! even for you I could not endure a father’s grief, a brother’s scorn.”

“ Enthusiast,” said lord Greythorn, as he vainly endeavoured to suppress the tear which trembled in his eye, “ well may your father boast his wealth is in his children ! I have foreseen this visionary evil, and will prevent it. Look up, Archibald Melross—hear me pledge that honour, as unsullied as your own, that in this affair the shadow of a shade shall not rest on the unblemished name of Melross. I will write to your father, and confess to him

him that I have lured you to my house to win your love for Ellen Seymour; nor will I spare that father," cried the indignant earl, "who thus compels me to beg a husband for his daughter. My faith, my honour, the baron cannot doubt. Need I repeat, the heart of Ellen is all your own? Archibald Melross, what would you have more?"

Melross knelt at the feet of lord Greythorn, he pressed his hand to his lips, to his throbbing bosom, but all utterance was denied him; and the good earl, in pity to his feelings, left the room, telling Harvey he would expect to meet them half an hour hence in his study.

When lord Greythorn had finished his letter to the baron, he gave it to Melross; the blush of gratitude mantled over the cheek of the young soldier, as he read all that could satisfy a father's heart, all that could gratify his own.

His lordship now told them Mr. Seymour had been cajoled into giving a bond
for

for twenty thousand pounds, which sum he was to forfeit if his daughter refused to marry this titled swindler.—“What does it signify?” said the city Solomon; ‘what girl will refuse to be a countess?’ I have lulled him into the belief that I will make no opposition to this union, and have invited the knave and the fool to dine with me to-morrow, to arrange the marriage-settlements of Ellen, and by that time pursuit will be unavailing. But it is my firm belief that my lord Thornby would prefer the forfeit to the bride.”

Lady Greythorn insisted on making one of the bridal party, and her lord, with sensations of unalloyed pleasure, witnessed their departure for Scotland. The next day the expected guests came to Berkley-square, and found lord Greythorn deeply engaged in perusing a letter, which he gave without comment to Mr. Seymour; it was from captain Harvey, and merely stated he had gone off to Scotland with his cousin Ellen, and that lady Greythorn
and

and his friend Melross were the companions of his way.

“As I am a living sinner,” cried Mr. Seymour, “I am all in a maze! What need he run away with the girl, when he knew in his heart it was only ask and have? I am sorry for your loss, my lord; but it is no fault of mine,” looking at the same time the very picture of delight.

Thrown off his guard by this sudden overthrow of all his hopes, lord Thornby poured such a torrent of abuse on the astonished merchant, in which his oratory was not forgotten, increasing every moment in violence and scurrility, that lord Greythorn, unable to endure it any longer, took the arm of Mr. Seymour, and left the room.

“Did ever mortal hear such a tongue? Billingsgate Nell is a trifle to him,” cried Mr. Seymour, as he wiped the terror-drops from his forehead. “Lord save my poor child! what an escape she had! And I am very little obliged to my nephew, I can tell

tell him that, for getting me such a mobbing. I can't see what rhyme or reason he had for setting off to Scotland after such a fashion, when he might have been married at home, with many thanks, and grandeur, and merriment, and splendour."

They now heard the voice of lord Thornby in loud vociferation as he left the house, swearing he would enforce the merchant's bond on the following day.

"Do so, do so, if you can, my lord Thornby," muttered Mr. Seymour.

Lord Greythorn now laid before him an account of lord Thornby's debts, which his active agents had procured.

"Lord save me!" again repeated the terrified merchant, "he owes more than half what I am worth in the world."

As his lordship disclosed the real character of the profligate earl, he portrayed the misery of Ellen, the remorse of her father, if the designs of this libertine nobleman had succeeded, in such impressive language, that the agonized father wept
like

like an infant, and he acknowledged Melross had a second time saved his daughter. Lord Greythorn soothed his wounded spirit, and when his mind was completely tranquillized, his lordship mentioned the bond.

“As to that, my lord,” cried Mr. Seymour, with great exultation, “she can never refuse what never was asked; I never told Ellen a word about it; and let him scold me out of twenty thousand pounds if he *can*.”

The next morning, true to his threatful promise, lord Thornby went with two lawyers to Harley-street, and claimed, in the most insulting and abusive language, the forfeited twenty thousand pounds.

“Scold away, my lord Fishmonger, scold away! that is all you will get for your trouble. As you never asked Ellen Seymour, she never refused to marry you; so make money of that, if you *can*.”

Transported with rage and disappoint-

ment, lord Thornby lost all command over himself, and in the height of his uncontrolled fury, gave Mr. Seymour a violent box on the ear.

“Bear witness,” cried the long-patient, but now thoroughly-roused merchant—“bear witness every body, that I am assaulted in my own house, and lord Thornby gave the first blow;” then darting on the earl, he laid him prostrate at his feet, where he continued to beat and thump him without mercy, roaring out all the time with Stentorian lungs—“An assault! an assault!”

With some difficulty the friends of lord Thornby succeeded in getting him out of the house, and Mr. Seymour declared, between scolding and fighting he had a pretty time of it.

When this account reached lord Greythorn, his lordship insisted on Mr. Seymour taking the necessary steps to secure the future peaceable conduct of lord Thornby.

by, who, finding he could not enforce the bond, and unwilling to encounter captain Harvey, left England next day.

As Melross and his bride knelt to Mr. Seymour for blessing and forgiveness, the eyes of the good merchant overflowed with joy.—“ They must have a harder heart than mine to refuse you,” cried he, pressing them alternately to his bosom; “ but I have been battered and abused since I saw you, and nearly bamboozled out of twenty thousand pounds, and all by a lord. You must come home with me to Harley-street; you have pleased yourselves, and it is only fair you should now please me.”

“ That famous scolding lord Thornby gave my uncle,” said Harvey, softly, “ has banished all the graces of oratory, and left unadorned all the genuine kindness of his guileless heart.”

To gratify his uncle lord Greythorn, Augustus left the army, and became a member of the British parliament. But

the promotion of Melross was rapid; by the powerful interest of lord Greythorn, two days after the birth of his son, he obtained the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

CHAPTER IV.

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### *The Visit to Scotland.*

By the skilful manœuvring of Harvey, Mr. Seymour determined on asking lord Melross and his family to the christening of his grandson.—“ I will be the bearer of your invitation, uncle,” said Augustus, “ as I intend to go a-wooing to the Glen; I wish to make an early choice, and secure it if I can. Seriously, Archibald, without intrusion, could I spend a week or two with your family before their coming to London, it would gratify me most highly.”

“ You

“ You will see at Glenfillan Place none of the splendour which now surrounds you, but they are rich in happiness; you will meet with no costly entertainments, but social kindness, harmony, and love, decorate my father’s board. I must confess,” continued he, deeply blushing, “ I have deceived you with respect to the age of my sisters—at first indeed without design—I forgot at the moment how long I was from home: they are no longer children. The more I reflected, the more I wished this deception to continue; a portionless daughter of Melross was no bride for the noble heir of the powerful lord Greythorn, and I hoped you would make a more suitable choice before you saw them. My father, my brother, could ill brook the ever-ready tongue of slander, that might say the man you loved and trusted had duped you into this unequal alliance.”

“ I thought, Archibald,” said Harvey, gravely, “ I possessed your whole heart;

but now I find the world's dread laugh, its pride and prejudices, engross the largest portion of it; but yet your sin against me bears so strongly the stamp of virtue, as binds you still more closely to my heart—makes me more anxious to secure your sister's love—the approbation of her family.”

When Harvey repeated this conversation to lord Greythorn, he replied—“Pursue your inclination, my beloved Augustus, I will not cross your path; it will not indeed lead you to wealth, but it will conduct you to happiness and honour.”

A few days after, Mr. Seymour asked his nephew when he would set off for Scotland—“I wish to send by you a few tokens of brotherly love to my lord the baron, and this letter, in which I have endeavoured to prove his presence will be as welcome to me, as much desired, as the first song of the cuckoo is welcome to, and desired by the farmer; and that no young heir ever longed more for much-loved

loved twenty-one, than I long to embrace my brother the baron ;” and Mr. Seymour flourished his hands with great solemnity.

“ Do you think, uncle of mine,” cried Harvey, “ that I will be the bearer of such a letter ? Would you have me laughed at by the whole family of Melross ? ”

“ You do injustice, Augustus, to both my fathers, in supposing the one could excite ridicule, or the other bestow it, in return for so much kindness ; and if you think them capable of so much ingratitude, you judge erroneously of the whole family of Melross.”

“ If you don’t choose to take the letter, Mr. Augustus Harvey, I can send it by post.—I can’t stay to argue now, for I must meet Vander Dender, the Dutch merchant, to settle about the cargo of the Van Tromp.”

“ How can you behave so to your uncle, Augustus ? ”

“ And how can I help it, Archibald ?



I have no wish to be introduced to your family by the sweet voice of the cuckoo; and if he wont burn his letter, I wont go to Scotland. How can I expect that every one, like you, will wade through the rubbish of his understanding to ascertain the real value of his heart? Lord Greythorn, in speaking of him, says he has two characters; the natural one—simple, benevolent, and full of goodness; the artificial—wild, ridiculous, and nearly approaching to insanity.”

“ We both bear him the utmost affection, yet he is often the torment of our lives. Yet, after all, Augustus, the song of the cuckoo is a very appropriate simile to a farmer; and what is Evremond more? It is unfair to judge these simple children of nature by the lofty grandeur of lord Greythorn’s sentiments, or the fastidious nicety of your own: they would esteem the little eccentricities of your uncle, if indeed they noticed them at all, as harmless foibles, while his benevolence and kindness

kindness would be duly appreciated. I pledge my honour you will meet nothing to wound your feelings at the Glen: I have apprised Evremond of your intention; do not mortify him too severely by refusing to go to Glenfillan Place."

"That sacred pledge I will not doubt," said Harvey, pressing the hand of his friend; "if they are indeed like you, I need not dread the cuckoo's note."

"To spare your blushes, captain Harvey, I have sent my letter by post. I hope it wont offend your dignity to take a few remembrances from me to lord Melross," said Mr. Seymour, as his servants placed package after package into the travelling carriage of lord Greythorn, which his lordship insisted on sending, for the accommodation of the baron and his family.

"My dear sir, so much luggage will greatly inconvenience Augustus: he will look like a travelling pedlar."

“What a plague it is to deal with boys! Did you ever see a pedlar stuck up in a nobleman’s carriage? or did you suppose I would send him all the way to Scotland empty-handed, to my brother the baron?”

Harvey now declared, if his uncle could pack into the carriage the whole cargo of the Van Tromp, he would take charge of it with pleasure; and Mr. Seymour having arranged every thing completely to his satisfaction, Augustus Harvey, with a light and happy heart, proceeded on his journey to Glenfillan Place.

He was received with the affectionate welcome of a favourite son—of a much-loved brother; and as he pressed the hand of Amabel to his lips, his choice was made. She was the softened image of her father and brother: Jessy, though equally beautiful, resembled her mother’s family. The appearance of comfort, and even elegance, in the establishment of the baron, was scarcely to be expected from his limited fortune;

fortune; but the union of heart and hand was every where perceptible in this family of love.

In the evening the baron asked his sister to give them a little music, and she readily complied. Mrs. Mordaunt, while in England, had cultivated her musical abilities, and was now a first-rate performer on the grand piano; Amabel swept the chords of the harp with graceful modesty; and as Evremond breathed the full-toned flute, Augustus beheld the Apollo of former days. Every instrument was musical in the hands of Mr. Mackenzie, and he displayed his powerful execution on the violin, as they performed one of the most difficult compositions of Handel in the first style of finished excellence.

After some time, Evremond and his friend laid aside their instruments, and joined the ladies in several national ballads; and Harvey declared, till that evening he never heard the soul of song.

The next day there was a large party at

the Glen, and Augustus remarked a handsome youth, whose golden hair parted in rich curls over his polished brow, seated between the sisters.—“Who is that envied mortal?” said Harvey to Mrs. Mor-daunt.

“Lindsay, of Craig-Roslin, their mother’s nephew: you may perceive the strong family likeness between him and Jessy. For once he has escaped the watchful vigilance of his guardian, Mr. Mackenzie’s brother, who will not allow his visits at the Glen. But Craig-Roslin will not always be a minor, nor Jessy the beggar he takes such pride to call her.”

This information silenced every jealous pang fast gathering round the heart of Augustus, and he determined, should he be so fortunate as to win the love of Amabel, to assert a brother’s happiest privilege in securing the permanent felicity of the blooming Jessy.

When dancing commenced, Harvey remarked the uncommon beauty of Evremond’s

mond's partner, and asked his own, the fair Amabel, who she was?

"Miss Hamilton, William Lindsay's cousin." Miss Melross sighed deeply, and evidently wished to avoid any conversation on the subject.

"I will analyse that sigh," thought Augustus; and a few mornings after, as he walked with Jessy in the garden, who treated him with the frank affection of a sister, he mentioned their beautiful visitor.

"Every one loves Grace Hamilton," said the artless Jessy. "How grievous it is that iron-hearted Mackenzie, and his own rash vow, should prevent her union with Evremond!"

Harvey now lured from his innocent companion the secret of her brother's hopeless love.

"Grace Hamilton was an orphan dependent on an uncle, too much given to his own pleasures to make any present provision for his niece, and too young for her to expect any heirship for many years.

Mackenzie,

Mackenzie, the rich Mackenzie, had a large farm, which joined the baron's estate, and he had promised to set it to Evremond on a long lease; and his skill in farming, and his great success, had induced him to hope that, in a few years, he might marry his idolized Grace without injury to his family. Every thing was settled on, when the account came of Archibald's noble present to his sisters. This flinty-souled man then would not set, but sell; and he told Evremond he might as well pay interest for this money as a stranger, and set the farm he would not. Amabel and I knelt and wept in vain. In this Evremond was as flinty-hearted as the rich Mackenzie, and he relinquished all his airy-dreams of happiness to preserve his high-souled honour unsullied."

"And what became of the farm, my sweet Jessy?"

"No one would take it, after his conduct to Evremond; he set it up to roup, but

but no one would bid or buy. Evremond is as much beloved as the rich Mackenzie—oh, how unlike his brother!—is hated; he is always at variance with his neighbours; his fences are broken, his cattle are rifted—his hand is against every man, and every man's hand is against him.”

The resolution of Harvey was instantly formed; he told Evremond he was going to Edinburgh to transact some business for his uncle, secretly determined not to return till he had secured possession of the farm.

Captain Harvey had frequently met Mr. Macdonald, the banker, at the house of his uncle Mr. Seymour, and to him he applied to purchase the farm, cost what it would.

“That land,” replied Mr. Macdonald, “was promised long ago to Mr. Melross; and he who takes it over his head will bring great odium on his own. May I take the liberty to ask, captain Harvey, when you took the fancy to turn farmer?”

“I may



“ I may as well confess the truth,” thought Harvey; and he did so, and his intention of settling it on Miss Hamilton. “ To such an overgrown fortune as mine it will be such a trifle, that I hope Evremond will not, fastidious as he is, refuse me the happiness of contributing to his. Remember you have my confidence, Mr. Macdonald; and I must request you will not mention our present conversation till I am fairly out of Scotland, as I have yet to consider how I shall make this offering of sincere friendship, without offending where I wish only to be obliged by the acceptance. I suppose a little advance in the purchase-money will make Mackenzie hold his tongue for a few weeks.”

Mr. Macdonald now entered heart and hand into the business, and in three days gave the deed to captain Harvey, which secured him possession of the farm; and Mackenzie gave the desired promise, not to reveal the name of the purchaser till he chose himself to avow it.

Harvey

Harvey now became impatient to return home; the only regret he felt was leaving Mr. Mackenzie alone and solitary, but nothing could induce him to visit England. Mrs. Mordaunt, though included in Mr. Seymour's invitation, wished to reside with her own friends while her family remained in London; and without accident or adventure they arrived safely in Harley-street.

Mr. Seymour bowed and flourished, and the good baron bowed and flourished his very best in return; while both the fond fathers, with equal delight, beheld their children and their grandchild, they were too happy to be wisely rational.

"I will leave you," said Harvey, gaily, "to all this sweet confusion, and make a little confusion of my own in Berkley-square."

In about an hour Harvey returned, and with him lord Greythorn. All his stateliness was laid aside, as his lordship welcomed the baron to England as a highly-valued

valued friend; he addressed individually every one of the Melross family with the most cordial kindness, but the expression of his eye-beam, as it rested on the fair Amabel, spoke volumes to the heart of his nephew.

“ My lord Greythorn looks so agreeable, and stays so long,” thought Mr. Seymour, “ I might venture to ask him to a family dinner, without offending his dignity;” and after much mental debate, the invitation, with a suitable number of apologies, was made.

“ If you will extend your hospitality to lady Greythorn,” replied his lordship, “ I feel too happy in the present society to relinquish it. Augustus, you can send our excuses to the duke of Derwent; tell his grace the real cause—the arrival of our highly-valued friends, and my unwillingness to separate from them the first day of their coming to England.”

Even Harvey looked astonished at this condescension of the lofty earl, but Archibald

bald felt the compliment in his heart's core. Evremond, in the contemplation of his brother's happiness, endeavoured to forget his own individual regrets, and entreated the silence of his family on his disappointed hopes.—“ Archibald has nothing of his own to bestow, and I would not despoil his family, not even to be the husband of Grace Hamilton.”

Lord Greythorn became every day more anxious to see his heir united to Amabel Melross—“ The coronet of Greythorn,” said his lordship, “ will receive additional lustre from the brow of that faultless beauty ;” and with difficulty he was prevented by Augustus from declaring his sentiments openly, till he had secured the happiness of her brother.

Two months passed away ; the lapse of time seemed unnoticed by all but Evremond—he became restless and unhappy, and at length declared it was unfair to impose all the labour on his friend Mackenzie ; April was fast approaching, and  
there

there was much to be done at Glenfillan Place.

“ Very unfair indeed,” repeated the baron, and his lordship became as anxious as Evremond to return home.

The fair sisters left without regret the splendid ball-room, the crowded theatre; but they grieved to leave behind their brother Archibald, the much-endearred Ellen, and her little son. For lord and lady Greythorn they felt all the grateful affection which their unbounded kindness merited; but as they said farewell to their kind uncle, as they called the highly-gratified merchant, their tears flowed in abundance.

## CHAPTER V.

*The Work-Box.*

“ You promised me, Evremond, that you would bring a work-box to Miss Hamilton, to replace the one I demolished so awkwardly at the Glen,” said Harvey, as he opened a very beautiful box he held in his hand.

Evremond smiled at the anxiety he displayed to prove there was no hidden treasure, no lurking love-token in its tiny drawers.

“ I despair of her taking it from any hand but yours. Give me your honour, Melross, you will prevail on her to accept it, with all its valuable contents—scissars, bodkin, silk, and needles.”

Evremond again smiled at this anxiety  
about

about such a trifle, and gave unconditionally the desired promise.

Amabel, who was present, offered to take charge of this present to her friend, and remarked, as Harvey placed it in a morocco case, he pressed one of the silver flowers which decorated the lid.

“ Sweet home!—How many blissful ideas these simple words convey to my heart!” said Evremond, as he sprung out of the carriage to meet his friend Mackenzie; but every blissful idea fled, as he remarked the pallid cheek, the wasted form of his earliest friend.—“ You are ill—you are dying!” cried he, wildly pressing him to his bosom; “ this life of solitude has destroyed you. How often, how vainly have I entreated to be recalled! but you would not allow me to return.”

“ If I am ill, anxiety for you has caused my illness. Dearest Evremond, you have a severe trial to encounter; but remember, He who permits this trial, tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.”

“ Grace

“ Grace Hamilton,” cried the agonized young man—“ Grace Hamilton——”

“ Is well and faithful, thank Heaven !”

“ What then have I to fear ?”

“ My brother, my iron-hearted brother, has sold the farm to a stranger.”

“ What then ? Grace Hamilton is well and faithful ; there is more land, and more gentle landlords, to be met with in the neighbourhood of Glenfillan.”

“ What’s more, my friend—his heart, my brother’s flinty heart, has been warmed into love by the beauty and sweetness of Grace Hamilton : he sought, and won her uncle’s consent ; and every art and every force was tried to make her his wife. How grievous it is that my own brother is the only man in all this country who would thus persecute the affianced bride of Evremond Melross ! But Evremond is here to protect his bride ; he cannot, dare not persecute her now.”

“ The evils which time and industry can remove I will not shrink from, my  
best



best, my earliest friend; your pupil will not disgrace his master. But where, Mackenzie, is my affianced love?"

"Here, at Glenfillan Place; I assisted the persecuted girl last night to escape from her uncle's: to-morrow she goes to Edinburgh; the house of Mr. Macdonald, her relation, is a safe and honourable protection. Miss Hamilton has undertaken to educate his only child; her task will be easy; Mrs. Macdonald is good and gentle, and loves her as a sister."

This last blow, the most severe of all, fell like an icebolt on the heart of Evremond—that Grace Hamilton should be obliged to labour for her bread was agony beyond endurance, and it required all the power Mackenzie possessed over his mind to tranquillize his feelings, and convince him how improper it would be for Miss Hamilton to remain at Glenfillan.

They now entered the house; their absence had been unnoticed—the story of Grace Hamilton had engrossed all the attention

tention of her sympathizing friends. The fair sufferer alone was composed: she welcomed Evremond with a smile of such touching sweetness, so full of pious resignation, of patient meekness, that, unable to conceal his emotion, he walked to a distant part of the room to subdue it.

Mackenzie deplored the anguish he could not cure, and, merely to break the heavy silence, remarked the morocco case, and asked what it contained.

“I have promised, my sweet love,” said Evremond, “that you will accept this work-box, to replace the one broken by captain Harvey the morning he left the Glen, with all its valuable contents of scissars, bodkin, silk, and needles;” and with an attempt at gaiety he opened the work-box. The mirror which lined the lid was loose, and Miss Hamilton drew from the aperture behind it a letter to Evremond Melross, and the title-deeds of the farm, regularly assigned to Grace Hamilton and her heirs for ever.

Every eye was turned on Evremond, but all remained still and silent as stoney statues. As Melross read the address of Harvey, all his high-souled pride that would not be obliged forsook him.—“Harvey, you have conquered; from you, noble-minded young man, I can accept obligation without danger of degradation.”

The baron closed his upraised hands, and said—“Bless him, oh my God! as he has this day blessed me and mine!”

Amabel and Jessy hung delighted on the bosom of their brother, and left him only to caress and cheer their beautiful sister, as they fondly called Miss Hamilton; while the cheek of Mackenzie regained its native roseate hue, as he echoed, with equal gratitude, the blessings and the praises of the grateful baron.

When the tumult of their joy had in some degree subsided, lord Melross called for his writing-case.—“I will write to your noble-minded friend, my son, and  
bid

bid him to our bridal; a father's heart shall bless him, a father's hand entreat him to come and witness the happiness he has made."

When the baron had finished his letter, he perceived the paper blistered in many places by the joy-drops which had unconsciously fallen from the eyes of the happy father.—"Let it go," said his lordship—"it will bear testimony of the happiness he has created."

## CHAPTER VI.

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The Blessing.

AT the sound of the chariot-wheels of Harvey the assembled family ran to meet him; the greatly-agitated baron took his hand—"Accept, my noble-minded young friend, a father's blessing: may your children's

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dren's children see you, a youthful sire, as rich in happiness as you have made me and mine!"

"One blessing more, my father," said Augustus, sinking on his knee—"Give me your daughter Amabel to wife."

The head of lord Melross dropped heavily on the shoulder of Evremond.—

"Support me, my son; I shall expire with this excess of bliss."

The weakness of the baron was but momentary: he took the hand of Amabel, and as he placed it in that of Augustus, again repeated his blessing and his thanks.

The next morning Harvey mentioned the wish of his uncle, lord Greythorn, to be present at his marriage.—"Your house stands upon so large a space of ground, that I thought your lordship might accommodate my uncle without inconvenience; and I told him so."

"Not only my lord Greythorn and his noble lady, but my kind brother, Mr. Seymour, my own Archibald, if he can
leave

leave England, and his lovely Ellen.—The relation who adopted me had a peculiar fancy for building, and every shilling he could spare was laid out on this house, in which there are many noble apartments unoccupied. My Amabel that is gone and I selected the smaller ones, as more comfortable and better suited to our limited fortune. While I am writing to your noble uncle, and my good brother Seymour, you and Evremond can look over the rooms, and regulate them as you like.”

“This is by much the best part of the house,” said Evremond, as he conducted his friend through several lofty apartments; “the banqueting-hall would not disgrace the former barons of Melross.”

“It will make a famous ball-room: we must get it fitted up immediately.—Would my lord the baron deem me an encroacher, Evremond, if I asked him to allow me to spend a month or two every year at Glenfillan Place?”

The deepest crimson suffused the countenance of Melross.—“Harvey, I read your heart; but the husband of my sister, the friend, the benefactor of us all, must command even my fastidious temper. Do with these apartments as you please, I will guarantee my father’s consent to your wishes.”

“Ten thousand thanks, Melross; on my honour, I never felt more obliged: to confess the truth, lord Greythorn would rather walk on a Persian carpet than on the finest velvet lawn that ever was embroidered by the hand of Nature, and that prospect would appear hideous to his lordship, that was not seen from a window curtained with silken drapery. I am well acquainted with the eccentricities of my family, and feel anxious to gratify them in their own way. How shall we proceed? can we get what is wanting in Scotland, or shall I send an express to London?”

The nationality of Melross glowed on
his

his countenance.—“There are very rich carpets and very handsome drapery to be had in Scotland.”

“Our friend Macdonald will assist us—his own house is splendidly furnished; and we must ask him to dance at our bridal, Evremond—his society will be quite a treasure to my uncle Seymour.”

The deserted apartments soon wore a brilliant appearance, and the encroaching Harvey contrived to model the whole house to his fancy.

“The voice of an angel could scarcely persuade me, three years ago, Mackenzie, that I would suffer such a load of obligation from any man on earth; yet I have allowed a stranger of three months’ acquaintance to portion my bride, and to new-model and decorate, in this expensive style, the house of my father.”

“And I,” said Mackenzie, smiling at the still-unsubdued pride of his favourite, “have allowed this same stranger nearly to rival you and Archibald in my heart.”

With feelings of the most unbounded delight Archibald Melross once more entered the house of his father, and lord Greythorn contemplated the unexpected splendour and real happiness of all around him with undisguised satisfaction; while Mr. Seymour, caressing and caressed, bowed, flourished, and harangued his loving and beloved auditors, and felt himself at the very pinnacle of happiness.

As the brothers walked over the richly-decorated apartments, they found Jessy weeping bitterly in the ball-room.—“What grieves my sister?” said Evremond, kissing the tears off her innocent cheek—“what grieves my sweet Jessy?”

“Mackenzie, of Brachenburnie, wont let William Lindsay come to our bridal; he threatens to enforce the penalty in his father’s will, and keep him a minor till twenty-three, if Lindsay disobeys him.”

The eyes of Evremond flashed fire.—“Tyrant! he may thank the love, the gratitude I bear his brother, or long since
I would

I would have made him tremble at the name of Melross."

"It wants a week of the bridal day," said Archibald, anxious to sooth the irritated feelings of his brother; "Mackenzie may relent."

They now saw a horseman approach them at full speed; it was Lindsay of Craig-Roslin. Evremond threw open the window.—"Hasten—delay not—follow me to Brachenburnie!" said the almost-breathless Lindsay, and the next moment he was out of sight.

The brothers sprung hastily from the window, and when arrived at the house of Mr. Mackenzie, they found a number of people collected before the door, from whom they learned Mr. Mackenzie had that morning ordered the cattle of one of his tenants to be seized for rent: the case was peculiarly severe on his part, and he found those he had employed to make the seizure so tardy in their duty, that he, Mr. Mackenzie, assisted himself to

drive the cattle which had so laggardly been seized upon by his order; when one of them, more vicious or more worried than the rest, turned suddenly on the ruthless landlord, and gored him so dreadfully that he expired on the spot.

Lindsay by accident witnessed the last sigh of his guardian, and ordered him to be brought immediately home; then hastened to Glenfillan, in order to get some of the family to assist him in securing the papers and the property of the deceased; and the brothers found him busily employed in sealing the drawers and cabinet of his late tyrannic guardian.

Mr. Mackenzie was greatly shocked at the sudden and violent death of his nearest relation, but he affected not to lament as a brother the man who had treated him with such cruel neglect, and with whom he had little intercourse since he was three years old; no exultation sat on the brow of the wealthy heir—his manner was marked by that strict propriety which
never

never forsook him, even for a moment; and the memory of the rich Mackenzie was rescued from the odium it so justly merited, by respect for the feelings of his brother.

On the day of his marriage, Harvey resigned the portion of his bride to her sister, and, without wounding the delicacy of her family, took the entire expence of the bridal on himself.

Three months after the death of his brother, Mr. Mackenzie was married to the still-beautiful Annie; and the same day Jessy became the bride of William Lindsay.

Nothing material occurred in the family of Melross till a year after the marriage of Mr. Mackenzie, when the lovely and beloved Ellen died in giving birth to a second son, who survived his mother but a few hours. This misfortune was equally deplored by her husband's family and her own, and the life of the young widower was despaired of for many weeks: at

length his health, but not his happiness, was restored, and he went with his regiment to Ireland, with a presentiment that he would never return. But time and change of scene restored his bloom and confirmed his health, yet the gaiety of his heart remained in the tomb of Ellen; and three years after, when he returned to England, the crape still covered his helmet and encircled his arm.

Colonel Melross found his cherub boy grown into grace and beauty, and as he nestled on his bosom or run by his hand, he lured the fond father into smiles and happiness. But the frown of discontent gathered fast on the brow of the doting grandfather—he could not endure to share the smiles of his darling with any one on earth; and when the artless boy spoke of his own papa, his handsome papa, the jealous pangs of the good merchant were beyond endurance.

“Augustus,” cried Mr. Seymour, flourishing both his hands with great solemnity.

nity, " if your brother-in-law wont marry, I will, and have heirs of my own : he has lured from me the staff of my age—the smiles of my darling—my all on earth—the only child of my Ellen. Tell colonel Melross from me, that if he consents to marry, but not else, I will settle all I am worth in the world on this boy. My poor Ellen's twenty thousand pounds, which I always considered his own, though he never would touch a penny of it, I have long since placed in the funds in his own name, and any addition he will accept from me, as a provision for another family, I will give with great thankfulness. If he wont comply with my wishes, I will marry myself; many a fine lady will marry the merchant for his money, though he may be a little stricken in years; not that I mean to say fifty-six is the age of Methuselah, Mr. Augustus Harvey; and then Seymour Melross will have little to thank his handsome papa for when he grows up."

Harvey.

Harvey, in repeating this conversation to his friend, softened the language of his uncle, and soothed the sorrowing young man.

“ When shall I meet another Ellen ?— Never. The smiles, the caresses of my child, had won me back to happiness; but I will not despoil him of a rich inheritance for my own gratification—I will resign him to his grandfather. Harvey, you are a father, and can appreciate the sacrifice I make.”

True to his promise, colonel Melross went no more to Harley-street; but the steady friendship of Harvey would not allow him time for solitude—Amabel and her lovely children grouped round him, and unconsciously won him back to social happiness; by degrees he mingled in their parties, and the smile of gaiety was once more seen on the beautiful countenance of Melross.

The first time he saw Emma Cleveland, her extreme likeness to his lost Ellen attracted

tracted and fixed his attention, and Harvey determined this first impression should not fade away; with artful kindness he contrived their frequent meetings, and the heart of Melross again expanded with love and hope.

When Mr. Seymour was informed that colonel Melross was willing to yield compliance to his wishes, the good merchant readily fulfilled his own part of the agreement—he loaded the blooming bride with costly presents; and as he pressed his infant heir to his bosom, fondly exclaimed —“ I have bought you, my darling, with all I am worth in the world.”

The fate of Emma and her husband is already known. When baron Melross heard this tale of woe confirmed, he closed his hands in pious resignation—“ His will be done, who gives and who takes away !” were the last words he ever spoke; a paralytic stroke followed the dreadful shock he had received, and a few hours terminated

nated the existence of the good, the exemplary baron Melross.

Mr. Seymour survived him many years, and Augustus Harvey, now lord Greythorn, assisted his grandson to rock the cradle of his old age, and his parting breath called down blessings on them who had long made existence to him a blessing.

The marriage of Seymour Melross with Rosabel, the youngest daughter of the present baron, who had succeeded to the estate of Mr. Hamilton shortly after the death of his father, was the occasion of so many of the family being in England.

The morning after sir James was forced from the theatre by the tormenting kindness of lord Coldbrook, dean Cleveland and Mr. Melross called on him at lord Milwood's. His lordship gave them a most ludicrous account of the conduct of lord Coldbrook, and his firm belief in witchcraft.

“ I protest,”

“ I protest,” said the dean, “ I never heard any thing so extraordinary ; I thought he had more common sense. What could induce the marquis to invent such a fairy tale ?”

Mr. Melross seemed greatly amused.—
“ Lord Greythorn told me yesterday a circumstance, from which we can readily trace the origin of this wild legend. About a year ago, the marquis of Leverton made proposals for lady Augusta Harvey, which were decidedly rejected. The self-love of the marquis was so severely wounded by this refusal, that his lordship has had no intercourse with the family ever since. Unwillingness that lord Coldbrook should hear of his disappointment, was no doubt the cause of his inventing this fabulous history, as an excuse to avoid them.”

When sir James was introduced to lord Greythorn, he was astonished at the fixed beauty of his countenance—his lordship looked scarcely ten years older than his
eldest

eldest son, that was married to a daughter of Mr. Mackenzie. In lady Augusta Harvey sir James Colville recognized the lovely witch who had caused such an uproar in the brain of lord Coldbrook; and in six weeks the Melross family left London, to celebrate the marriage of lord Greythorn's only daughter with sir James Colville, at Glenfillan Place.

CHAPTER VII.

The Deer Park.

AFTER a lapse of many years, we now introduce the son of lady Isabel and Mr. Melross as earl of Ellesmere: he had sought for and obtained the title of his grandfather, to descend to his heirs male and female; he had married the sole heiress of his uncle Seymour Melross, and
was

was himself the only child of his parents, and the heir of dean Cleveland. His lordship was a widower, and his son, lord Denbeigh, had been some years married to lady Louisa Davenport, daughter to the marquis of Heatherly; and shortly after, the present earl of Coldbrook was united to the sister of lady Denbeigh. These noblemen now stood in the same relative situation to each other as their grandfathers had done many years before.

Lord Coldbrook lost both his parents when an infant, and the old earl, his grandfather, took unceasing pains to impress on his youthful mind his own eccentric whims: in part only his lordship succeeded; the history of the Wizard's Glen the young Fitzauburne ridiculed as a fanciful romance, and nothing could induce him to bear enmity against a family that never shewed any hostile intention towards his own; but the wish to out rival the still-flourishing deer park of lord Hornby was fixed as firmly in his brain as the heart

heart of his grandfather could wish ; his solemn promise soothed the dying earl, and cheered the last ray of gently-declining life—that every exertion sanctioned by honour should be made to accomplish this long-cherished wish ; and lord Coldbrook now looked forward to the union of his only son, lord Fitzauburne, with one of the daughters of lord Denbeigh, as the means by which this solemn promise was to be fulfilled. Rosabel, the youngest, was the decided favourite of her cousin, and lord Coldbrook took advantage of this juvenile attachment to mention the long-wished-for union to her father. Lord Denbeigh could make no objection to this alliance ; and lord Ellesmere declared the first wish of his heart would be accomplished when Fitzauburne was married to his granddaughter.

In talking over this alliance with lord Coldbrook, his lordship mentioned that, previous to his leaving London that spring, he had settled his worldly affairs,
and

and made his will.—“ I have made both the girls of age at eighteen. To Geraldine, the heiress of my title, I have left five thousand pounds a-year; and at the death of her father, all my estates, either by inheritance or purchase: To Rosabel, one hundred thousand pounds, to which shall be added the Grove; I will resign it to Fitzauburne on the day he becomes the husband of Rosabel.”

With difficulty lord Coldbrook suppressed the joy he felt from appearing too excessive; and the settlements his lordship proposed making on Rosabel were liberal, even beyond the wishes of her grandfather.

Lord Fitzauburne was seventeen, and Rosabel three years younger, when this engagement was entered into by their fathers, and the attachment of the affianced lovers became every day more apparent.

“ There is one profligate less in the world,” remarked lord Coldbrook, when he heard sir Charles Selwyn was killed in a duel. “ His friend the signora has no doubt

doubt taken good care of herself; but what is to become of his daughter? sir Charles has long been considered a ruined man."

"The dowager marchioness of Heatherly has adopted this child of her favourite nephew, and is lavish in her praise: the marchioness intends to bring her next week to the Grove."

"Let the dowager beware—the serpent she nourishes in her bosom may sting her to death."

"You are severe, Coldbrook," said lord Ellesmere, mildly.

"No, my lord—indeed I am not. Can the flower of the poison-tree ever be the blossom of health; or the child of an infidel father, educated by his abandoned mistress, be a cherub of purity at fifteen? This visit of the marchioness to the Grove, thus accompanied, gives me more uneasiness than I can well account for. Fitz-auburne shall not leave Oxford while they remain here,"

When

When the expected visitors arrived, lord Denbeigh beheld, with admiring wonder, this masterpiece of nature, Frances Selwyn; no look of conscious beauty increased the brilliant colour on her cheek, or sparkled in her clear blue eye—the smile of innocence played on her coral lip, and virgin modesty and timid softness were throned on her polished brow.

In the evening, the marchioness desired Miss Selwyn to accompany her voice with the harp; and saint Cecilia seemed again to visit earth, as she sung, "*Angels, ever bright and fair,*" in sounds almost celestial.

Lord Coldbrook was cold and silent, nor accorded in the general voice of praise. The humble pleading look of Frances caught his eye; it seemed to say—"How can you hate a being so anxious to win your favour?" But the countenance of his lordship remained unaltered—cold and repellent as a stony statue; and he retained,

tained, during the entire evening, the same stern severity of manner.

The next day lord Coldbrook did not appear at the Grove; and lord Ellesmere, who loved him as a son, went to Elmwood Castle to inquire the cause, and found his lordship in deep cogitation in his study. From his morning dress, it was evident he had not been out all day.—“Have you been ill, Henry,” said his lordship, “that we have not seen you at the Grove as usual?”

“Never better, my dear lord; but, to confess the truth, a few of the fanciful legends of my poor grandfather,” and his eyes glistened as he spoke, “were floating through my brain, and the lapse of time was forgotten. Were he alive now, his opinion of the enchantress at the Grove would not save her from the penalty of witchcraft. Seriously, I tremble for the peace of Denbeigh, his admiration for this syren is so sudden, so rapid, so enthusiastic.

I must

I must be a charmed man; for repellent to my heart are her smiles, and I shudder as if a serpent crossed my path, as I look on her witching form."

"This is a very bad return, Harry, for the evident admiration Miss Selwyn bestowed on you, ungracious as you were determined to appear."

"I make no doubt she would admire the coronet of a countess, though placed on her brow by the hand of a widower twenty-two years older than herself; and a large estate is preferable to a state of dependence on an antiquated dowager. I see through her arts, and wish to Heaven I had nothing more to fear for Denbeigh than myself."

"I think," said lord Ellesmere, half-jestingly, "you are well inclined at present to compose a fanciful history, and make poor Denbeigh a hero of romance, and Miss Selwyn the enchantress that is fated to lure him to ruin. Come to the Grove as usual, Henry, and be his spear-
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and shield against enchantment ; my son cannot have a more faithful guardian of his peace and honour."

When lord Ellesmere returned home, he found the house in confusion ; the carriage of the duke of Dunbane had been broken down near the Grove, and lord Denbeigh, who witnessed the accident, had him brought home. The duke was greatly bruised, and bled profusely from a wound in his temple. His grace was too much exhausted to speak, and seemed in a kind of stupor. The medical gentlemen who were called in to his assistance, apprehended no material injury to his grace ; but the great debility occasioned by the loss of so much blood, and the bruises he had received, might prevent his being able to travel for some weeks, and desired his grace might be kept perfectly quiet.

Miss Selwyn was now all anxiety for the invalid duke ; nothing could induce her to strike the chords of the harp, or raise her dulcet voice beyond a whisper ;
though

though the duke was placed in a part of the house so remote from the apartments usually occupied, that a full concert could scarcely be heard in his room.

“Angel of softness!” said lord Denbeigh, in whispering accents, “I tremble as I gaze, lest kindred angels should call their sister spirit to the skies, and take from the desolated earth its brightest ornament.”

“This lady fair, so celestialized, would prefer the ducal coronet to ornament her brows, on which her mental fancy is so firmly fixed at present, to all this angelic praise,” thought lord Coldbrook, as his dark eye seemed to search the inmost recesses of her heart.

Conscious, but without confusion, the fair Frances bore the scrutiny, and wished to evade, by the most consummate art, the penetration of his eagle eye.—“The day may come, my haughty lord,” thought the indignant beauty, “Frances Selwyn will be no longer a portionless orphan;

and if my power can reach you, tremble, thou haughtiest of the haughty !”

The intended union of lord Fitzauburne with his cousin was a source of unceasing vexation and regret to the marchioness of Heatherly ; her ladyship had destined the splendid dower of the affianced Rosabel to clear the not-lightly-encumbered estate of her favourite grandchild, the young marquis of Heatherly, and the disappointed marchioness poured her unavailing lamentations in the attentive ear of the signora da Cortina, whose soothing adulation, like the honied dew-drop, balmed the irritated feelings of the dowager.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Italian.

GUIDED by an infallibility of judgment, which, in her own opinion, was incapable of error, the marchioness could never be induced to believe that signora da Cortina was more to her nephew, sir Charles Selwyn, than the governess of his daughter; and the wily Italian took advantage of this favourable opinion, to establish herself in the neighbourhood of her ladyship at Richmond, where the signora had free access to her former pupil. The graceful sweetness of the Italian, the dulcet softness of her well-timed adulation, won the esteem, the bosom's confidence of the weak, vain, and self-deluded marchioness of Heatherly, and confirmed her belief that the

G 3

mind

mind of the fascinating signora was as perfect as her form.

The morning before Miss Selwyn's visit to the Grove, the signora da Cortina mentioned the earl of Coldbrook as one of the richest noblemen in England.—“His lordship is an enthusiastic admirer of beauty; and who is so perfect in loveliness as my Frances? Exert your powers of fascination, child of my heart—the coronet will bind that polished brow of thine; and my peerless Frances, no longer a dependent orphan, will shine the brightest beauty of the British court.”

“The earl of Coldbrook has a son older than I am, signora.”

“What then, my rose of beauty? his lordship is still young, handsome, and what the prejudiced would call virtuous and amiable. Introduced to the admiring world as countess of Coldbrook, you will be worshipped as fashion's brightest idol, and princes kneel at the shrine of sovereign beauty. Let ambition be your guiding

ing star, and pomp and power will follow in your train. But oh beware of love! its rosy wreaths are full of thorns; and she who truly loves will be the victim of imperious man, who smiles but to destroy. Had ambition been my guide, splendour, and power, and greatness, had been mine; but I loved, and the rosy wreath I chose planted the thorns of disappointment in my heart, more deep, more deadly than the venomed serpent's tooth—I loved, and was deceived, abandoned, scorned.

“ At fifteen I left the convent in which I was placed at four years old, to witness the nuptials of my sister with an Italian nobleman of the highest rank, and thought the new world I entered on a paradise of sweets. Great care had been bestowed on my education, as the future wife of the duca del Campo: he was three times my age, stupid, well-intentioned, and wealthy beyond the power of calculation.

“ Among the bridal guests was a young Scotchman, whose face and form I never
G 4
yet

yet saw equalled; his smile was the harbinger of love and joy, and his graceful gaiety threw a fascinating charm on his every look and motion. My heart expanded to receive the admiration he so lavishly bestowed—I loved, I worshipped this idol of my heart's truest, fondest affections, and turned with terror and disgust from my affianced lord, to bask in the beam of brightest beauty—the sparkling eyebeam of the Scottish Edward.

“ My lordly father issued forth his fiat—in two months my doom of misery was sealed for ever, for then my union would take place with the duca del Campo. Despair and anguish seized my fainting heart, which my haughty sire mistook for maiden bashfulness, and without hesitation he consented to my return to the convent of St. Ursula till the allotted period.

“ I had for some time observed that religion was more the cloak than the staff of this community, so much celebrated for its piety; and the superior dreading my penetration,

penetration,

penetration, and the exposure which might follow my entrance into the world of fashion, was easily prevailed upon to assist my escape; and my noble lover exceeded in liberality the most avaricious dreams of the abbessa of St. Ursula.

“I remained for some time in the neighbourhood of the convent, to avert any suspicions that might fall on him after my flight was known; but the holy abbessa had equally secured us from suspicion and from danger. A young English girl, whose friends had placed her in the convent of St. Ursula, to take the veil and then be forgotten for ever, died of a broken heart the morning I escaped from her cloistered prison, and Marianne Sedly was lamented as the daughter of the marchese of ———, and buried in the tomb of his ancestors.

“I left my native Italy in the habit of a boy, and appeared in Spain as the orphaned relative of my lover, and for three years I realized the fabled bliss of angels.

“ Don Jerome d’Aveyro, a Spanish noble, of haughty and overbearing manners, fastened a quarrel on my beloved one evening at the French ambassador’s: they agreed to meet next day at the ruins of Santo Pietro: a smile of the most deadly import passed over the malignant features of D’Aveyro, and stamped assassin on his brow. Soon after he spoke to one of the attendants: the man returned in half an hour, and addressed don Jerome, who instantly left the room. I glided softly after, and perceived the favourite domestic of D’Aveyro enter with his lord. — ‘A small refreshment soon.’ Light as the thistle-down were my footsteps, as I concealed myself behind the drapery of the window.— ‘Tell Baptiste Guiscardo,’ said don Jerome, ‘to meet me at midnight; a friend of mine wants his services before three o’clock to-morrow. He may demand his own price,’

“ The servant bowed, and withdrew. D’Aveyro approached the sideboard near
which

which I stood, and filled a goblet with sparkling wine.—‘A pleasant and happy meeting with your friends in Elysium, marquis of ——!’ and he raised the goblet to his lips.

“The servant again entered, don Jerome placed the untasted wine on the board, and they walked to a distant part of the room. I always carried in my bosom a precious drug, which gave to death the appearance of apoplexy, and for three days the usual symptoms of poison did not appear on the body. A moment removed the drug from my bosom to the cup, and with a heart light as my feathery footsteps I joined my Edward in the ball-room, before he missed me from his side.

“When don Jerome again appeared, the triumph which inflated his bosom shot in rays demoniac from his eyes, and he smiled with horrid pleasure on all around. Suddenly the pangs of dissolution seized his frame, and he fell to the ground, convulsed and speechless. My Edward was

the first to assist and support him; and as he pressed the hand of the dying man in amity, he looked as unearthly as a fancied angel of light. The physicians who were hastily collected around him, declared the death of don Jerome d'Aveyro was occasioned by apoplexy, and the real cause was never suspected.

'You will not meet don Jerame d'Aveyro at the ruins of Santo Pietro to-morrow,' said I, rapturously embracing my lover; 'nor will the stiletto of Baptiste Guiscardo be sheathed in your bosom, my Edward.'—'What means my Isidora? and who is Baptiste Guiscardo?'

"I now declared to him the treachery of don Jerome, and the means by which I had preserved his life. No fond embrace, no rapturous acknowledgments for preserved existence, followed this proof of love enthusiastic; the frame of Edward became convulsed with agony, and 'murder!' in horrid accents, fell from his pallid lips.

"I endeavoured

“ I endeavoured to prove the necessity of self-preservation, and incautiously derided the fear of future vengeance, and a world to come.—‘ Leave these monkish fables, my beloved Edward, to those less fortunate, less happy; while we, unshackled by superstition, bask in the sunbeam of love and joy.’

“ The next morning, his cheek was pale and cold as marble, and his smile was the smile of agony. After breakfast, my lover mentioned his intention of going to ‘Toledo, and I readily consented to accompany him. I was scarcely seated in the carriage when my eyes grew heavy, and placing my head on the bosom of my Edward, I fell fast asleep. When I awoke, how changed my pillow and my fate! how changed the heart that glowed so late with love supreme, unbounded!—I was placed on a small bed in a narrow cell, whose grated window gave sufficient light to shew I had been divested of my boyish habiliments, and now wore the habit of a novice

novice of St. Clare. But my corset still circled my waist, in which the careful abbessa of St. Ursula had concealed some fine diamonds, the gift of my intended husband, the duca; a large packet of the powder whose efficacy I had so recently proved on don Jerome; and directions how to assume the complexion of every nation, without injury to my own. I esteemed these precautions useless; and as the abbessa drew the portrait of *man* as he is, I believed the picture coloured by disappointment, and shaded by monastic gloom; but I have since found the colouring from nature, shaded by experience.

“ I now recollected, and determined to profit by the advice of the friendly abbessa, and treasured her counsels in my heart:—to bend to the storm I could not brave; to let revenge lie dormant in my bosom, till I could avenge my wrongs an hundred fold; and that vengeance should pursue him who abandoned or deceived the heart that truly loved: that heart was
mine

mine that loved so truly ; but hatred, deep and deadly, usurped the place of fond affection, and *him*, who, a few hours before, I would have died to save, I now considered as a monster of ingratitude, fit only to be blotted from creation ; and calmed the tempest of my mind with hopes of future power—of future vengeance.

“ In about an hour a wrinkled nun entered the cell, whose face was the epitome of envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness.—‘ Arise,’ she cried, in hollow and sepulchral tones, ‘ arise, and follow me.’

“ I bent in gentle meekness before this harridan.—‘ Holy mother, will a saint like you condescend to tell a child of earth why am I here ? why do I wear the habit of St. Clare ?’

“ The hag grinned horribly a ghastly smile, and again repeated—‘ Arise, and follow me ; we have punishments for the stubborn, and chains for the refractory.’

“ My heart was not dismayed by the grim visage of this Hecate, whom I followed,

lowed, without fear or trembling, into the presence of the superior. The abbadessa was alone, and my hideous conductress instantly disappeared. I approached with an aspect of deep humility, and kneeling at the feet of the madre, placed my forehead on her footstool.—‘Rosalie des Tormes,’ said the superior, in gentle accents, ‘your pious brother has restored you to the bosom of the church, to which you were dedicated from infancy, and has been a munificent benefactor to this convent for your sake; and if severity has tempted you to stray from your late abode, the name of which I shall never seek to know, let the kindness you will here experience convince your friends that you no longer wish to stray from the paths of piety and peace. Rosalie, your heretic lover is no more. Be thankful that, by his death, you have escaped being contaminated by the heresy of his principles.’

“As I could not clearly comprehend the meaning of this harangue, I clothed my

my ignorance under the veil of affliction, and wept abundantly, determined to remain absorbed in grief till I could ascertain the assigned cause for making me a prisoner for life.—‘Arise, my child, and be comforted,’ said the mild madre donna. She kissed my forehead, and sounded a small silver bell which stood on the table beside her. Hecate again appeared. Disgust, not terror, impelled me to draw the veil, which nearly enveloped my form, over my eyes, and the next moment I half-dreaded my own temerity of conduct.—‘Tell sister Maddehina to attend,’ said the gentle abbadessa; and when I unveiled my features, the countenance of the beautiful nun spoke peace and comfort to my heart.—‘Daughter,’ said the madre, ‘cherish this drooping blossom, and balm with soothing gentleness her wounded spirit; and may holy St. Clare inspire her heart with gratitude at her escape from the seductive arts of that vile heretic, who is now no more!’

“ I again

“ I again knelt at the feet of the abbadesa, and, as I had previously determined, was unequal to give utterance to the feelings which agonized my bosom ; and agony unspeakable I did feel, when I reflected on faithless, perjured Edward, and how I was deceived, abandoned. But the hope of vengeance braced every fibre of my heart to energy ; and while revenge and hatred burned brightly in my bosom, I appeared to these simple daughters of monastic bigotry as the image of meek and patient suffering.

“ I soon lured from the guileless Madelina the story by which my faithless Edward had imposed upon the credulity of the abbadesa of St. Clare.—‘ You were brought here three hours ago, in the habit of a boy, and fast asleep, by a noble-looking cavalier, pale as death, and dreadfully agitated. He said you were his sister, and dedicated to the church from infancy. The superior of the convent in which you were placed was harsh and severe, and he acknowledged

known the austerity and gloom by which you were surrounded had nothing to charm or allure. You had eloped, the morning before, in male attire, with an Englishman of some rank—were pursued, and overtaken; the young Englishman was mortally wounded, and died at midnight.’

“The meek-eyed Maddelina concluded this fabled history by saying, my brother, anxious to save me from punishment in the convent from which I had escaped, anxious to preserve me from the malediction of a justly-incensed father, had infused an opiate in my chocolate; and in placing me under the care of the highly-esteemed abbadessa of St. Clare, had endeavoured to secure my present and future happiness.—‘At parting, all the manly pride of the noble cavalier was moulded into female softness—he wept like an infant, as he pressed you repeatedly to his bosom.’—‘Such are the tears, I mentally exclaimed, shed by the crocodile over his immolated

immolated prey. But I will yet cause you to shed tears of blood, false, faithless, perjured Edward !

“ I allowed the simple Maddelina to believe her pious endeavours, assisted by holy St. Clare, had succeeded to calm the anguish of my mind ; and mentioned the terrific nun, her threats of chains and punishment.—‘ Sister Ulrica has an unbridled tongue, and is herself the only object of terror within these walls. I will report her conduct to the madre donna, who will reprove her unlicensed liberty of speech. Sister Ulrica is perfectly harmless, because she has no power to be otherwise ; but if we had a less amiable superior, our lives would be burthened with discontent.’

“ To bend to the storm I could not brave was now the daily practice of my life, and my patience, humility, and anxious desire to please, won for me the approbation of the superior, the esteem of the pure-hearted Maddelina, and the affection of Clara St. Carlos, our most distinguished

guished boarder, and niece to the archbishop of Toledo.

“ Donna Clara was generous, high-spirited, and enthusiastic in her romantic ideas of love and friendship, and I increased the wild fancies of her brain by repeating legendary tales of love, in which fate was always the guiding star. I allowed, by gentle degrees, my native gaiety to appear tempered by timid modesty, and as I raised the choral hymn at evening vespers, the convent of St. Clare was crowded to hear a voice unequalled in Spain; and the simple sisterhood believed their patroness, holy St. Clare, had wrought a miracle in my favour.

“ One morning Donna Clara, my attached friend, entered my room (for I had been removed from the narrow cell, death’s head and cross bones, as a reward for submissive meekness).— ‘Ulrica the abominated,’ said the youthful donna, ‘has watched me so closely these two days, that

that I have not been allowed to speak one word to you in private, my sister.'

"The door opened softly, and the gorgon head and spectral form of Ulrica the abominated stood before us. The first motion of the door placed the life of St. Clare in my hand, and I commenced reading in a low but distinct voice to my companion. When Ulrica perceived our employment, her attempt at being courteous made her look still more hideous.—'Gentle daughters, permit me to be a partaker of your divine recreation,' and the grizzly nun placed herself between us.—'We wish to be alone,' said donna Clara, with great haughtiness; 'you may go and report our employment to the madre.'—'I shall remain where I am,' replied, with equal asperity, the highly-offended Hecate; 'a professed nun of St. Clare is not to be dictated to by a boarder in the convent, and it is the duty of a novice to obey.'—'I will remain a boarder in this convent no longer;

longer; the archbishop, my uncle, shall be informed of your insolence,' and the indignant Clara instantly left the apartment.

"The grizzly nun raised her withered hand, and pointed her boney finger.—'Beware,' she cried, in a voice which sounded as if from ruined caves, 'that flaunting glowworm, that *ignis fatuus*, will lure you, by a faithless light, back to the world, back to that certain ruin from which the miraculous power of holy St. Clare, sealed by the blood of your heretic lover, has rescued you.'

"A dead silence followed, and I uncovered my eyes to ascertain if my persecutor was really gone, when I beheld the gentle abbadessa, and by her side the highly-irritated Clara St. Carlos.—'Ulrica,' said the superior, with as much sternness as her mild features could assume, 'retire to your cell, and remain in solitary confinement for ten days. Mark well how you obey my orders, or those chains for the
the

the refractory, which, from long disuse, have rusted in this convent, may grow polished on your arms.'

"Sinking at the feet of the abbadessa, I bedewed them with my tears, and kissing the hem of her garment, besought the pardon of Ulrica.—'No, my gentle child, it cannot be,' and she pressed her pure lips on my brow. 'I never punish but where punishment is due, and my word once passed, can never be recalled; nor shall your peace, my artless innocent, be the victim of her inhuman tongue.—Take example, offending daughter, by this child of meekness; and may this chastisement improve your temper and your heart!'

"When alone with donna Clara, her delight was expressed with all the wild energy of her character.—'Some kind spirit of the air, sweetest Rosalie, placed this little volume in your hand; as a safeguard against the malignity of the hideous Ulrica, and conducted the footsteps of the abbadessa even to your threshold, where I met

met her. The superior has sufficient sense to know the illustrissimo, my uncle, would not suffer his niece to be insulted so grossly with impunity, and sufficient feeling to appreciate the patient forbearance of your conduct. Sweet sister of my heart!" continued this lovely enthusiast, 'soon may I salute you as the bride of the noblest youth in Spain—of my brother, don Juan St. Carlos !'

CHAPTER IX.

Grizzle Grey.

“ A VERY singular old lady had been for some weeks a daily visitor at the convent of St. Clare, to purchase the beautiful work of the nuns; a gray kind of capuchin, as extraordinary-looking as the wearer, shaded her gray locks and wrinkled

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brow; a mantle of the same colour descended to her feet. She came to the convent in an old-fashioned carriage, painted grey; and a grey-headed footman, habited also in grey, attended his mistress to the grate.

“ Though a liberal, she was a most tormenting purchaser—dissatisfied with everything, yet always selecting the most beautiful embroidery—paying the full price, often doubled, when her capricious fancy inclined her to be charitable. Clara and I were often obliged to assist sister Madde-lina to please this tormentor, who would change her fancy twenty times in a minute, and folding and unfolding the painted silks and embroidery was sufficient employment for us all; but she paid so liberally, and was so charitable, that Grizzle Grey, as the lively Clara called her, was always received with respectful attention, and her whims gratified to the utmost extent of our abilities. . . .

“ Suspicion and curiosity were equally grafted

grafted on the mean and cunning mind of Ulrica, and she insisted this grey lady was some impostor in disguise, which, in the insolence of self-arrogated power, she determined to unmask; and two days before, she had incurred the displeasure of the abbadessa, Ulrica entered the parlour in all the majesty of spectral horrors.

“Grizzle Grey crossed herself with great devotion, and muttered an *Ave Maria*; then hastily exclaimed—‘What a fool I was to believe a spirit of hell could appear here, at least in the daytime! I suppose,’ addressing sister Maddelina, ‘you keep this scarecrow to frighten the little girls into good behaviour. I thought the earth could not produce an uglier face than my own; but now I yield the palm. Shake hands, grim queen of ugliness unrivalled!’ and darting a large tawny hand through the grate, she seized the boney fingers of Ulrica, and pressed them so long and so fervently, that the voice of the encaged nun sounded through the convent like the

wild roaring of the tempest, while she vigorously employed her disengaged hand in battering and pinching that which held her own so firmly, declaring, though half-choked with pain and rage, it was a man, for no woman could have so fierce, so firm a grasp.—‘Young and handsome, no doubt,’ said the grey lady, laughing with hideous good-humour, displaying at the same time the frightful remnant of her teeth. ‘Sister goblin, your penetration is deceived, well as you can ascertain the difference between the hand of man and woman.—Beautiful nun,’ and Grizzle Grey again addressed the meek-eyed Madeline, ‘if you can get me the picture of this gentle vestal, I will give you ten doubloons for it: I have three or four noisy grandchildren, the very sight of it will keep them in good order.’ She now placed a large charitable donation in the hand of Madeline, and limped off as usual.

“Great indeed was my surprise to find
Grizzle

Grizzle Grey and don Juan St. Carlos one and the same person. Donna Clara drew from her bosom a picture and a letter, when she had finished the history of her brother's romantic passion for her friend; I examined the portrait minutely when alone; handsome it certainly was, but fickle and faithless was legibly written on every feature.—‘No matter,’ thought I, ‘he will assist my revenge on perjured Edward; nor country nor clime shall screen him from my vengeance.’

“The letter was finely written, and smoothly worded; the lover-like language called me wife of his soul and empress of his destiny; one word would have explained the whole laboured production, and that word was *deception*.

“In the evening Clara forced on me another letter, which mentioned a priest was in readiness to unite us the moment I left the convent. The innocent Clara joined her entreaties to those of her brother, and when I had obtained sufficient

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proof,

proof, under his own hand, of the honourable proposals made by don Juan, I consented to be deceived. Freed from the prying eyes of the suspicious Ulrica, I fearlessly ascended, in the habit I had once so happily worn (that of a boy), a ladder of ropes, which I had securely fastened at the foot of the garden wall, and my lover received me with all the rapturous delight usual on such occasions. He placed himself beside me in a carriage, and we proceeded with great velocity for near an hour, when we alighted at a handsome but secluded habitation. A well-dressed middle-aged woman received us, whom don Juan introduced as his cousin, donna Elvira Salvador, who had kindly invited us to remain with her till his friends were reconciled to receive me as his wife.

“ I readily, but not ignorantly, partook of the refreshments presented by donna Elvira, and soon became insensible to all around me; and when I awoke the following

lowing morning from my enforced sleep, my head was pillowed by the arm of don Juan St. Carlos: prodigal were his vows of love and everlasting faith, and he believed me the dupe of his art, while I secretly determined to make him feel the power of the supposed helpless girl he had lured to infamy and ruin.

“Two days after, don Juan brought me a letter from Clara, which, had he taken the trouble to inspect, I had never received. She addressed me as the wife of her brother, the sister of her heart; and lamented the solemn promise she had given to don Juan prevented her declaring this fondly-valued relationship to her uncle, the archbishop of Toledo.

“Don Juan was already in full possession of my contempt, but I never loved enough to hate him; and after a comfortless seclusion of many weeks with donna Elvira, I began to reflect by what means I should escape from my present, and accomplish my revenge on my former lover.

“ After an absence of some days, to which I had now become habituated, don Juan mentioned his intention of going to the carnival at Venice.—‘ I cannot bear to part from you so long, my Rosalie ; assume the boyish habit, and be my companion ; I shall be envied my beautiful page.’— ‘ Already so degraded !’ thought I ; but the willing slave was only seen in the assenting smile. Every hour more forcibly contrasted the conduct of don Juan with that of my once-idolized Edward, who shielded me from suspicion and scorn by his manly care, and never would allow me to wear the female habit till he should present me, in his own country, to his noble kindred as his wife ; which, faithful to his promise, the high-souled Edward would have done, had not the frenzy of superstition steeled his heart against me : but I quickly banished every softer feeling, and remembered only the vengeance I had sworn.

“ At Venice I was nearly as much secluded

cluded as at donna Elvira's, while don Juan culled the roses of love, and left the thorns to rankle in my bosom. But no secret haunt, no public way of the libertine don Juan was concealed from my penetration. I followed in disguise, and beheld with indifference the pride he took in being numbered among the lovers of Semphina, niece to the reigning doge. But, oh! for ever be blotted from my heart the wild despair, the maddening agony of that moment, when I saw my perjured Edward smile heavenly sweet on this mequet of universal admiration. Her life was safe—she smiled not in return, but preferred the gaily-crested serpent, don Juan St. Carlos. Sure was my aim, and steady was my hand, as I plunged my stiletto into the bosom of Edward, a few paces from the palace of the doge, which he had left at an early hour; and as he fell, I breathed the name of Isidora in his ear.

“ I regained my home in safety, and

sweet was the accomplished vengeance that soothed my happy slumbers. The next day, don Juan mentioned the assassination of the marquis of _____. I carelessly observed, all the lovers of the fair Seraphina should wear armour, if they expected to escape the steel of the assassin. This hint had the desired effect; the fair Seraphina was instantly deserted by the faithless Juan, who loved sincerely nothing but himself, and I returned to dull seclusion at donna Elvira's solitary mansion.

"I was now in that situation which should have called forth all the soothing tenderness of don Juan; but careless neglect had succeeded his lover's vows, and I perceived the empress of his soul held no longer any dominion over his heart. The manners of donna Elvira had changed from fawning servility to familiar impertinence, and I again began to reflect how I should escape from this palace of dullness, when one morning I observed the picture of
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of don Carlos de Medina, the favourite companion of don Juan at Venice, on my dressing-table. I haughtily demanded what brought it there?—‘I did,’ replied donna Elvira, with unblushing effrontery. ‘Be wise, and accept the protection of a rich and handsome lover, who adores you. Don Juan St. Carlos was married two days ago to the richest heiress in Spain.’

“I affected to disbelieve this calumny, and threatened to acquaint don Juan with her perfidy. An insulting smile passed over the countenance of Elvira, as she told me don Juan would return no more—he had resigned me for ever to his friend, don Carlos de Medina. A conversation of some length followed this assertion, and the experienced duenna became the dupe of the artless-seeming novice.

“Donna Elvira consented to accompany me the next morning to Toledo, where I might ascertain the marriage of don Juan; and I promised obedience to her wishes, if I found her statement true.

Once in Toledo, I defied the power of Elvira and her vile employers: I was well acquainted with every avenue which led to the pallacio of the archbishop, through the apartments of which I had frolicked as a boy, when Robert Bruce was protected by his cousin Edward.

“ The following morning Elvira was true to her promise. When we arrived at Toledo, I glided swiftly from her side, and gained the pallacio of the archbishop in safety. I entered the private saloon, where I knew the illustrissimo received, at a certain hour every day, his most intimate friends; and sinking nearly exhausted at his feet, in the heart-melting tones of innocence oppressed, I sued for protection from misery and ruin. He raised me with pitying gentleness.—‘ Inhuman must be the heart,’ he said, ‘ that could injure such perfect loveliness, and accursed the fiend that could seek to ruin such innocence and beauty!’—‘ Oh! curse him not, illustrissimo! curse not your nephew, don
Juan

Juan St. Carlos ! but save me from his friend, don Carlos de Medina.'

"The dismayed archbishop turned his half-doubting eyes on don Juan, who stood before him, the statue of detected guilt. Gentle were the commands of the archbishop, as he desired to hear the story of my wrongs: Truth requires not the embellishment of art, and brief and simple was my 'round unvarnished tale.' I placed the letter of donna Clara, with those of her brother, in his hand, and the well-known characters confirmed my truth, and the perfidy of don Juan.—'Monster!' cried the archbishop, while every limb was palsied with horror, 'leave my sight, and for ever!'—'Monster!' repeated a clear shrill voice, and donna Beatrice, the bride of Juan, stood confessed in all the jealous frenzy of nuptial power.

"Apparently shocked by her violence, I clung to the robe of the archbishop.—'Oh, holy illustrissimo!' cried I, 'withdraw not from him, from don Juan St. Carlos,

Carlos, the sunbeam of your favour—the only cheering ray that now can brighten his existence.—‘Beauteous lady,’ and I knelt at the feet of this blooming termagant, ‘be kind and gentle to your husband. I loved him once—oh, how fondly!—But I will hide this devoted head in France or England; never shall he again behold the lost, deserted Rosalie.’

“Really fatigued, I became weak and fainting, and was removed, by the orders of the archbishop, to another apartment; and donna Clara, summoned by the order of her uncle, shed on my bosom the genuine tears of affliction; the artless girl believed I had died the wife of her brother at Venice.

“My triumph over don Juan was now complete; it was but justice to make his art recoil upon himself; had I been the tame victim he supposed, want, infamy, and death, had been my portion.

“Made rich by the bounty of the archbishop, I arrived in France; at parting,
he

he gave me an emerald of uncommon beauty.—‘ Sweet, injured Rosalie! be your child male or female, give it my name—Antonio or Antoniette St. Carlos; and should you wish to resign it hereafter to my care, this ring will secure my adoption of your child.’

“ Thus was I cast, abandoned, on the world’s wide stage, by the perfidy of man, in my nineteenth year. At Paris I met the gay and elegant sir Charles Selwyn, whose mind was unfettered by those prejudices which first withered the roses of love in my bosom; I could not expect a legal establishment of rank; I had no husband to forsake, to give publicity to my lover, and secure his faith by forfeiting my own; I wished not to plant the blush of shame on the cheek of my child, but to give her an honourable birth, as the daughter of sir Charles Selwyn.

“ That you are my child, my Antoniette, you already know; but not of sir Charles Selwyn, as you have always believed;

lieved; his wife died in France, a few months before our meeting in Paris, and the tomb of the mother was soon opened to receive her infant girl, and I prevailed on sir Charles to adopt and acknowledge you as his daughter.

“ Separated for the first time from your mother, my Antoniette, let her counsels sink deep into your heart. If man seem good and amiable, remember the faithless Edward; if secret and romantic are his vows, remember don Juan St. Carlos; and forget not that she who truly loves, and trusts in man, will be deceived, abandoned, like your mother. Warned by my fate, seek not the rose of love till you have secured an honourable rank in life by marriage, then wear the rose divested of its thorn.”

CHAPTER X.

*The Duke of Dunbane.*

A FORTNIGHT after the accident which introduced him at the Grove, the duke of Dunbane made his appearance in the drawing-room. His countenance was melancholy, and though but four years older than lord Coldbrook, might have passed for his father: when the duke did smile, it illumined a set of features which had once been handsome, but now were wan and faded; and the high polish of his manners could at times scarcely conceal the nervous irritability of his temper.

“Very extraordinary,” thought lord Ellestmere, “very extraordinary indeed, that a beautiful young girl should take so much trouble to amuse a melancholy mope, without

out either youth or good-humour to recommend him." But the good earl thought it still more extraordinary, when he heard the duke of Dunbane was the accepted lover of Miss Selwyn.

His grace lamented to lord Ellesmere and the marchioness of Heatherly, the Dunbane estate was so situated that he could make no larger settlement on Miss Selwyn than two thousand pounds a-year. The younger children must always be provided for by the mother's dower, or the economy of the father. His grandfather, some twenty times removed, had secured the estate to descend unencumbered to the next heir.

"But, my lord duke, your mother was a wealthy heiress."

"True, madam; but when I inform your ladyship how I have disposed of that fortune, I trust the motive will justify the deed. Shortly after my mother's death, I left Scotland, to make the tour of Europe; and in three months the duke, my father, married

married a young girl of sixteen, daughter to Mr. Lindsay, of Craig-Roslin, who enriched his son by giving a portionless bride to my father. In a few years I was anxious to return to my native country, but my father desired I might still remain abroad; and I at length found my return was neither wished for or expected.

“ When he died, I returned to my native land, and found no one to receive me at Elgin Castle but servants. A fine-looking man, who had more the appearance of a chieftain than a servant, addressed me as the steward, and asked my commands.—‘ Have I no brother, no sister, to welcome my return—no friend or relative to receive me?—am I a stranger in the land of my inheritance—a stranger in the house of my fathers?’ and I could have wept like a fretted schoolboy.—‘ And would your brothers be really welcome to your heart? and would you receive with kindness their uncle, William Lindsay?’ said the steward, advancing; and I soon recollected, in
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the open brow and happy smile of the supposed servant, my favourite class-fellow at Edinburgh—Lindsay, of Craig-Roslin.

“ I anxiously inquired what family my father had left, who I supposed were splendidly established, as my expences had been always limited to my mother’s fortune, over which he had no power; and I heard from Lindsay an account of folly and extravagance in age, which I blush to acknowledge as his son:—A ruinous propensity to gaming, joined to a most expensive mode of living, left my father in frequent want of money, though the actual possessor of sixty thousand pounds a-year: his wife died of a broken heart, without a hope that her children would be suitably provided for: lord Percy, the youngest, entered the army, without any future expectation from his father, and had been so fortunate as to engage the affections of the only child of sir Philip Jermingham, of Devonshire, whose estate was nearly as large as that of the duke, who,

who, without hesitation, consented his son should forego his own, and take the name and arms of Jerminingham; that lord Percy should resign his rank as the son of a duke, and become an English baronet, on the death of sir Philip.—‘And thus,’ cried I, with bitter agony, ‘is my brother blotted out from his family and his rank for ever, by the vice and folly of his father!—But where is William?—the duke perhaps has provided better for this his favourite son.’ —‘The half-year’s rent due a few days before his death, the duke left to him exclusively; but the high-spirited William has vainly endeavoured to divide it with his brother.’

“Heart-grieved to find he was left so totally dependent on the bounty of sir Philip, could I, the heir of such a splendid patrimony, leave my brothers necessitous or dependent? I never closed my eyes in sleep till the fortune of my mother was regularly assigned over to lord William Lindsay. As I placed the deeds in
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would change my travelling habit, as his friend Mr. Lindsay had informed his grace his tenantry would meet him on the road, and he wished his lovely Frances to appear a descended angel to her vassals. This feudal language made me expect a sort of feudal masquerade, and tartaned borderers, and targe and broad-sword, flourished before my fancy in mimic array.

“ About a mile from the castle, the duke perceived a vast concourse of people on the road, and we left the carriage. A group of elegant young men advanced to meet us; their scarfs of silken plaid were gracefully disposed, and their richly-plumed caps were ornamented with white ribbon. The duke replied with courtly grace to their address of flowing courtesy, which welcomed his return to Scotland.

“ As we proceeded on, our path was strewn with flowers by young men and maidens, who were ranged on either side of the road, holding in their hands baskets of flowers: the young girls were all dressed
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in white, their hair fancifully braided with white ribbon; the young men in their holiday clothes, over which they wore plaids, similar in colour, but not in texture, with their chieftains, and white satin bows were placed in their Scotch bonnets. The blooming chieftains, if it can now be an appropriate appellation, placed themselves behind us, and as we passed, each youth and maiden took hands, and followed in regular procession, while the multitude of gazers moved on in quiet order. Several bands of music were in attendance, and grand marches and national airs succeeded each other with delightful harmony.—‘I feel highly flattered,’ said the duke, ‘at this compliment from the Mackenzie clan, with whom I am only connected by the second marriage of my father.’

“The bridal train now stopped, and another group of plumed-capt heroes appeared.—‘These,’ said the duke, ‘are the noble family of Melross, to whom I have

the honour of being related, but not so nearly as my brothers.'

"This party was more numerous, more splendid than the former; their scarfs were beautifully embroidered, and every chief or knight had an attendant page, richly habited. Again were kind and courteous compliments exchanged, again was I welcomed to Scotland, with every mark of respectful admiration. They then mingled with the Mackenzie party, and we proceeded on our way to Elgin Castle, at the grand entrance of which I was astonished at the multitude of people I beheld—the whole country, as far as my eye could reach, seemed a mass of human heads; and the duke observed, it was long since there had been such a gathering of the Lindsay clan, and seemed to grieve that feudal greatness was no more—that this was only the mimic show of times long past, but never to be forgotten.

"As we entered the beautiful and extensive

tensive lawn, Lindsay, of Craig-Hoslin, presented two young men, whom a sovereign prince might proudly acknowledge for his brothers. The duke received them with rapturous delight, and embraced them in presence of his assembled clan, whose acclamations were as loud, as long, as fervent, as if the duke had returned a triumphal conqueror. The lawn was filled with all the rank and fashion in the country, and every Lindsay that could boast the rank of gentleman wore embroidered scarf and cap and plume: it was a grand and gallant show.

“How I grieve, dearest signora, you were not present, to witness the pomp, the power, the greatness of your child!—I will obey your commands, and never mention to the duke by whom I was educated. How I lament the only being that I love on earth must be a stranger to the ducal palace of her daughter!”

When the bridal festivities were over, which lasted many weeks, the duke of

Dunbane was anxious to spread around him that happiness which glowed so brightly in his own bosom. The tenantry on the Dunbane estate were rendered poor by the oppression of his father, and the unlicensed liberty of his conduct had allowed vice to make rapid strides among them; but the present duke determined to banish vice and poverty from his estate. His grace became individually known to every one of his tenants; the good and the industrious found him a liberal benefactor, while the idle and vicious shrunk from the severity of his frown; yet paternal was the hand which chastised their wanderings from the paths of rectitude and virtue, and the returning prodigal was welcomed with the smile of benevolence, and every encouragement and every support was given to the wanderer, that he might sin and wander no more; while his own conduct was a bright example of every Christian and every moral virtue.

In three years the duke accomplished
this

this work of benevolence and virtue; and vice and poverty, with their concomitant train of evils, were banished from the land of his inheritance.

“How much one man can do!” thought lord William Lindsay. “But who is equal to my brother?—not one; praises follow his footsteps, and blessings crown his head—himself the greatest blessing to his kindred and his country.”

But not so thought the beautiful duchess, who imparted her deeply-rooted dissatisfaction to the signora da Cortina:—“I have secured an honourable rank in life; but what are the pleasures which follow in the train of all this pomp and greatness?—a dull round of social and moral virtues, which I despise. What is the adulation bestowed on the young and beautiful duchess of Dunbane?—crippled age and busy housewives, whenever I appear, chant forth the praises of my lord the duke, and pray I may be worthy of his love. What are the gallant sights I see?

—proud lairds and haughty dames, with their rosy-faced sons and daughters, who laugh with frolic glee at every silly jest, and dance away the evening, as if their lives depended on this exercise. The adulation I receive is praises on the duke and his manifold perfections, and I must either bask in the sunshine of his reflected splendour, or remain for ever in the shade. The rich inheritance I hoped to secure by this splendid marriage, it may be many years before I enjoy; the duke looks twenty years younger than when I first saw him; the irritability is gone which preyed upon his spirits, he smiles with self-satisfied delight, and the rose of health has returned to his cheek.

“ Signora, dearest signora, is my bloom to fade in this ungenial soil, without even your cheering presence to console me? is my youth to waste away amid piety and prayer, which my unfettered mind believes to be the brain-wrought frenzies of monkish superstition? and must my heart
never

never expand to love and joy? and must indeed the cypress garland bind my brow for ever, where I fondly hoped the roses of love would bloom, divested of the thorn?"

Another letter followed, which marked the discontented spirit of the writer still more strongly:—

“ Have I not reason for discontent, signora, when I find my fortune must be limited, to increase the charitable fantasies of my lord, which are unbounded? He mentioned this morning to his second self, lord William, his wish to re-establish a school, of which his mother had formerly been the patroness, and supported at her own private expence.—‘ As I have been just to you, my sweet Frances, I may now afford to be liberal to those less gifted by the hand of fortune: I consider myself only the steward of a generous Master, to whom I must one day account for the talents entrusted to my care. I have placed in the English funds fifty thousand pounds

for your use, the accumulated interest of which, added to the original sum (for I now hope to live many years in the bosom of domestic felicity), will equal, I should hope, the wants and wishes of my widow. I regret not that I have no son to succeed me—the matured virtues of my heir will smooth the pillow of death, and leave no lingering regret on parting life for the happiness of those I leave behind;’ and the duke looked on this petted babe of six feet high, lord William, with all the fond affection of a father.

“Perceiving his grace expected I should be grateful, I silenced all the angry rage within my bosom, and appeared the fond, the happy wife, who never wished to see an hour beyond the life of him who won her virgin heart and all its fond affections. Nicely as the duke of Dunbane can discriminate, he wished it to be true, and was deceived. And now came forth in splendid array, decked in the gorgeous robe of charity, the plan of this intended seminary of benevolence,

benevolence, in which I little expected to be honoured with the rank of chief governess.—‘ Twelve orphan girls, daughters of decayed gentlemen, chiefly those of unbeneficed clergymen, were educated, with every accomplishment necessary to qualify them as governesses in families of rank; and out of thirty-six,’ continued the duke, ‘ which I recollect to have been sent at different periods from this seminary, not one ever disgraced their patroness, either by misconduct or unequal union; the major part were well established in marriage, the others remained in single respectability. Assisted by some young ladies of rank, my mother took upon herself to superintend the education of these young gentlewomen, and took care the people she employed should do their duty: my sweet Frances, whose virtues and whose graces are the theme of universal praise, will, I am certain, readily consent to be the successor of one as eminently gifted, by beauty, talent, and virtue, as herself:

the young ladies in this neighbourhood will be emulous to assist your gentle guidance, and be themselves improved, as they witness the unnumbered graces of my Frances. William and I intend to establish a similar school for boys, and qualify them for public or private teachers; and if a brilliant genius should raise his head among them, his talents shall not rest in obscurity. I fear we cannot bring our design into effect till spring, as the houses I intend to appropriate to these useful purposes must be repaired and enlarged, and we require the intermediate time of four months to select proper objects of our care.'

"The hope to shine the brightest star in fashion's hemisphere is now no more—the hope to bend the haughty Coldbrook to my will, and make him feel my power, must pass as a feverish dream; oh! let me breathe it softly in your ear, signora—so softly, that the passing breezes must not witness my confession:—I could have loved

loved this haughty earl—his manly beauty so fixed, I will call it, in youthful bloom!—so bland his manners, yet so dignified!—his form so graceful, so majestic, so sportively elastic!—his smile how sweet! how very witching sweet! Signora, I could have loved, but he despised and scorned me, and—I *hate* him.

“The fortune secured to my lord by this seclusion must be employed to please the monkish fancies of his brain, and make my slavery complete. Signora, dearest signora, your child will expire—I can endure no more.”

CHAPTER XI.

*Sudden Death.*

PREPARATIONS were now making for the marriage of lord Fitzauburne and Rosabel Melross: her settlement, in which the Grove was added to her former portion, was already prepared to receive the necessary signatures, when the earl of Ellesmere was translated to a better world without any previous warning. No one more deeply lamented his paternal friend than lord Coldbrook, and it is but justice to say, the deer park was forgotten in his grief for the good earl.

Lady Geraldine was eighteen three weeks after the death of her grandfather, and her first act was to secure the Grove to Rosabel, after her father's death; for
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the late earl, unwarned of his approaching dissolution, had made no disposition of this demesne in his will, and it now became the life-property of the present earl; and lord Coldbrook harboured not a doubt that his friend would honourably fulfil the promise of his father.

The marriage of Fitzauburne was again fixed to take place in six months after the death of lord Ellesmere.—“ I loved him,” said lord Coldbrook, “ as a son; I will mourn him as one.”

Respect for the memory of the late earl occasioned the family to remain at the Grove, and the marchioness of Heatherly gave up a London February to console her daughter lady Ellesmere, who never knew a wish ungratified during the life of her father-in-law.

The first blossom of spring brought with it a letter from the duchess of Dunbane to the marchioness of Heatherly.—“ Misery and sudden death,” said the greatly-agitated dowager, “ have been very busy with

with us of late; the duke of Dunbane has been murdered in his own shrubbery, and my heart-broken Frances wishes to spend the first months of her melancholy widowhood with me. I must return immediately to Richmond."

"Why should your ladyship leave us?" said lord Ellesmere, hastily; "rather prevail on your young favourite to stay here; our own recent misfortunes will keep us secluded till the marriage of Rosabel, and in alleviating her sorrows, we will endeavour to forget our own."

Lady Ellesmere, whose unsuspicious temper never allowed her to see beyond the present moment, readily acquiesced in the wishes of her lord; and the fair widow, in all the mockery of woe, was received by the family with kind commiseration—by lord Ellesmere with ill-concealed rapture; but lord Coldbrook and his son were purposely absent on the day of her arrival.

The last letter of the duchess roused into action every evil passion of the signora,
and

and the work of death was only delayed to increase the portion of her daughter. Already had the anxious duke selected the proper objects for his bounty, but the first orders given for their accommodation were the signal for his own death; habited as a Scottish peasant, the countenance of the signora wore the appearance of a sun-burnt labourer, and within sight of his own castle, her stiletto, now with twofold murder stained, was sheathed in the benevolent bosom of the duke of Dunbane.

The appearance of lord William Lindsay made her drop the blood-stained weapon, which the signora had been contemplating with savage triumph; and many were the disguises which secured her safe return to England.

Mr. Lindsay found his nephew cold and senseless as his brother; the head of the murdered duke rested on his bosom, and both his hands were pressed upon the wound; and when restored to animation,
his

his senses were completely gone. The whole country rose with one general feeling to seek the murderer, immense rewards were offered, but fruitless was every exertion—no trace of the assassin could be found.

As Mr. Lindsay examined the stiletto, he remarked the weapon belonged to no common hand; it was richly jewelled, and the name of Robert Bruce was formed in rubies on the hilt.—“How singular an Italian weapon should bear a Scottish name!”

“What a fool!—how unlike the guarded conduct of my mother to drop the stiletto!” thought the duchess. “I wish it had not escaped the prying eyes of Ulrica the abominated, in the convent of St. ——— But no matter; who can trace Robert Bruce to Eugenia da Cortina?”

The acting of the duchess was inimitable—no one suspected, even for a moment, the sincerity of her affliction; the signora supplied her with a drug which robbed her

her polished cheek of all its roseate beauty, and gave the appearance of ill health to her faded countenance.

Slow was the recovery of lord William, now duke of Dunbane, from the brain-fever which for many days menaced his life; and when he was allowed to receive the first visit of his widowed sister, new to actual guilt, the shock she endured was dreadful—the former duke seemed to appear before her as when she first beheld him—wan, pale, and faded—his form attenuated, his nerves unstrung; and she was ready to exclaim with Macbeth—“Thou canst not say I did it.” She wept convulsively; but the warning voice of conscience was like the dew of heaven falling on the bosom of a burning mountain—the flame of vice destroyed the soft impression, and left not a trace behind.

When informed by the unsuspecting Lindsay, that her fortune was increased more than ten thousand pounds by the death of his deeply-regretted friend the duke,

duke, the widowed duchess gently entreated to be spared any conversation on the subject; bowed down by affliction, she felt unequal to the task. Her brother had informed her that business would oblige him to visit England, when his health was sufficiently restored to bear the fatigue of travelling.—“ We can then arrange our pecuniary affairs with lessened anguish; the soul of honour and the name of Lindsay are synonymous—he will not seek to make the widow’s fate more desolate;” and the fair siren left Scotland, in full possession of the warmest esteem of the guileless Lindsay and his nephew.

Cold and ungracious was lord Coldbrook to the duchess of Dunbane; his lordship neither soothed her sorrows or welcomed her return, but watched with anxious dread the countenance of his son, as the eyes of lord Fitzauburne rested for a moment on a face and form where envy could not find a blemish. But the anxiety of lord Coldbrook was removed, his gaiety restored,

restored, as Fitzauburne, placed beside his affianced Rosabel, seemed to forget there was such a being in existence as the duchess of Dunbane.

Not so transient was the impression made by his lordship on the beautiful widow; in him she saw all that poetry or painting could express of manly beauty or of finished elegance—it was lord Coldbrook really, though not apparently, twenty years younger, on whose ruby lips the witching smile was unmingled with scorn; for lord Fitzauburne, believing her unkindly treated by his father, behaved to the fair Frances with that respectful attention which his polished urbanity bestowed on every female; and while unhallowed love filled the heart of lord Ellesmere for the duchess of Dunbane, it glowed with unbounded dominion in her bosom for the affianced husband of his daughter; but self-love was frequently obliged to confess the truism—lord Fitzauburne was kind, was attentive, but no more;

more; the smile of Rosabel illumined his countenance—his brilliant eye sought no other object of admiration; yet flattering hope still taught her to believe the choice was all his father's, not his own; Fitzauburne only loved obedient to the wishes of his sire, and only sought the hand of lady Rosabel Melross to gratify his wishes in a deer park.

The young widow imparted her sorrows to her maternal friend:—"Signora, dearest signora, the winding-sheet and the tomb will encircle and enclose your child; the willow and the cypress wreath fast tightening round my brow, are the signal of approaching dissolution. Of what avail are youth and beauty, wealth and power? I am dying a victim to hopeless love. Yet Fitzauburne, ever gentle, ever kind, would have returned my love, but, like a well-taught schoolboy, he feels it his duty to obey the wishes of his lordly father. The eagle eye of the haughty lord Coldbrook reads my inmost thoughts—he triumphs in
my

my anguish—he mocks the misery I endure; the arrogant young marquis of Heatherly marks with jealous watchfulness my every look and action; and should the willing smile of Henry rest even for a moment on me, the stormy passions fast gathering on his brow plainly declare how much he fears, through me, the long-cherished fancy of his favourite uncle may be disappointed. Signora, dearest signora, you whose perfect loveliness of form, fixed in unfading beauty, can assume at will the appearance of whatever form you please, come and let your cheering presence support your drooping child. Signora, dearest signora, without your counsel, your assistance, I shall expire.”

“ I come, my child, my Antoniette. Cold-blooded Coldbrook, you shall not triumph in her anguish, you shall not glory in her pain; and you, my arrogant young lord, fearless, high-spirited marquis of Heatherly, even you will I make the
instrument

instrument to seal the wedded happiness of my Antoniette."

The duke of Dunbane, now equal to the fatigue of travelling, came to the Grove to visit, and make a final settlement with the widow of his brother; and the melancholy duke was not unfrequently won back to smiles and happiness by the artless kindness of lady Geraldine Melross.

"We must go to Wales, Henry," said lord Coldbrook, a few days after the arrival of the ducal visitor at the Grove; "my uncle Lewellyn is dangerously ill, and wishes to see us both. I owe much obligation to his paternal care—every virtue I possess was either reared or planted by his guardian kindness—but for him I had been as brain-crazed with witches, warlocks, and family feuds, as my eccentric, though much-loved grandfather."

"Be comforted, my child," said the signora; "the absent Coldbrook cannot watch our actions. Be it your task, my Antoniette,

ette, to increase the partiality, which you have told me so obviously marks the manners of the moping duke of Dunbane, to lady Geraldine Melross; light as ether be your praise, as you enumerate her many virtues—how well the work of charity, scarcely begun, would flourish beneath her fostering care—the best monument that could be raised to the memory of departed worth unequalled; but be cautious—say not too little or too much; William of Dunbane can discriminate as nicely as his brother. Conceal not from the marchioness your anxiety to secure this splendid union for the lady Geraldine; let the sound of flattery drop light, but constant, in her ear; but on the cheek of lady Ellesmere you cannot lay too heavily the bloom of youth; give to her selfish indolence the name of sensibility—her want of feeling be gentleness supreme; you cannot colour too highly; if the portrait is but handsome, her ladyship will acknowledge

knowledge the resemblance. Lord Ellesmere is all your own; you will find no trouble to convince him how useless it would be to wait the return of lord Coldbrook to aggrandize his daughter."

"You speak, signora, as if this union was certain."

"Follow my directions, sweetest Antoniette, and doubt not. Lady Rosabel must accompany her sister to Scotland, and then the enamoured Ellesmere will be a puppet in our hands, and the long-projected marriage of Rosabel be broken off for ever. The Hotspur marquis will doubtless join the bridal train; I will have little trouble to convince the marchioness this youthful lord is secretly enamoured of his cousin, but honour confines the secret to his bosom with life-consuming anguish; that, could the Grove be dissevered from her portion, the hand, the splendid dower of the lady Rosabel, would be his own."

"But Heatherly would return, signora,
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to prove your statement false. How terrible his anger! how vengeful would be his rage!"

"Our wishes once accomplished, what care I for his rage?—the strong-nerved heart of Isidora was not formed to fear the warring of the elements—the stormy passions of mankind. If we can gain possession of the Grove, his anger will be pastime, for then Fitzauburne will be all our own: the deer park, not the lady, is the magnet."

The signora augured rightly; the lady Geraldine was wooed and won by the no-longer-melancholy duke.

Every account from Wales confirmed the danger of Mr. Lewellyn, yet still he lingered on; and lord Coldbrook requested the marriage of his niece might not be delayed, as he could not leave his paternal friend in such extremity.

A week after the bridal party left the Grove, the signora da Cortina acknowledged her vicinity to the marchioness of

Heatherly; ill health was the alleged cause of changing her abode, and with gentle humility she entreated the marchioness would continue her benevolent protection, and allow her former pupil to visit her as usual.

This address was well calculated to sooth the vanity of the dowager, and her ladyship determined to answer this elegantly-worded billet in person; and, accompanied by the exulting Frances, the marchioness entered the beautiful cottage of the signora da Cortina, situated nearly two miles from the Grove. The pale cheek, the fragile form of the signora, filled the grateful heart of her pupil with alarm, while, with fascinating softness, the beautiful Italian poured the sweet balm of adulation into the delighted ears of the dowager marchioness, who could not resist the entreaties of the signora to remain with her till evening—it might be the last time she could ever receive such an honour: the reflection that one noble friend had judged her
her

her without prejudice, would sooth even the pangs of dissolution.

“Who would have thought,” said the marchioness, speaking of the recent marriage in her family, “that Geraldine would have been married before her sister? This day four months exactly was to have been the wedding-day of Rosabel. I hope Mr. Lewellyn may recover—another disappointment would be quite shocking.”

“Poor lord Heatherly!” and the signora sighed heavily.

“What of George Heatherly?” said the alarmed grandmother. “I had a letter from him three days ago: he was well, and happy. His lordship is a philosopher; few can boast the strength of mind, the steady virtues of the marquis of Heatherly; at twenty-two, with a very plentiful estate, though it may be a little encumbered, I see no great occasion for philosophy, signora.”

“There are sorrows which wealth cannot cure, and youth is the season for love,

although it may not always be propitious."

"There is not a family in the kingdom," said the indignant grandmother, "that would reject the alliance of the marquis of Heatherly; there is not a lady, beneath the blood royal of England, would refuse his hand."

"And yet the marquis is doomed to wear the willow, the uncomplaining victim of hopeless love."

"Who or what is she," cried the marchioness, with emotion, "that could reject or scorn the finest young man in England?"

"Lady Rosabel Melross is the unconscious possessor of his heart. His last severe illness was caused by the approaching nuptials of his cousin: your ladyship watched beside his couch till quite exhausted; I was then allowed the honoured privilege of friendship, and took your place; the fever raged with violence—the secret of the marquis was revealed—pure
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and holy was the love which glowed in the bosom of lord Heatherly for his cousin; in his wishes, his prayers for her wedded happiness, every selfish feeling was forgotten."

“The attachment of lord Fitzauburne for his love-inspiring cousin,” said the duchess, “seems more like the fond affection of a brother than the first enthusiasm of love, which glows so bright, so pure, so fervid in the bosom of the marquis: his is the incense of the heart, that of my lord Fitzauburne the offering of duty, to gratify his father in the desolating whim of the deer park: a very ridiculous whim it certainly is, to lay waste the most beautiful seat in this country, to enlarge a park which fifteen earls of Ellesmere found sufficiently extensive. I always wished the union of Rosabel and Heatherly; he is high in rank, and her fortune would more than clear his estate.”

**“ Poor Heatherly !” and the eyes of the
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fond grandmother bore testimony to the feelings of her heart.

“ Say not too little or too much,” was the maxim of the signora. Exerting all her powers of fascination, she gently drew the marchioness from her unpleasant reverie, accompanied her pupil in several favourite duets, and, before they parted, moulded every thought of the marchioness to her will.

“ I cannot admit the visits of this signora,” said lady Ellesmere ; “ she was generally believed to be the mistress of sir Charles Selwyn. I am too young to play the lady Bountiful, and suffer every adventurer to patch up their reputation at my expence. I think Frances descends from her dignity as duchess of Dunbane, when she visits this signora of doubtful character.”

“ Your ladyship is at liberty no doubt to select your own visitors,” said the fair Frances, mildly ; “ but I was educated by
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this signora, I know her good and amiable, and I will not stamp her character as infamous, by deserting her."

"As you please, child," said the indolent countess; "I cannot force you to take good counsel."

Her ladyship reclined on a sofa, and closing her eyes, declared so much prosing on a disagreeable subject had made her quite nervous; and the marchioness felt it would be no easy task to introduce the signora at the Grove as her own visitor, or that of the young duchess of Dunbane.

"Shall I sing for you, my sweet cousin?" said the soft and silver tones of the beautiful duchess; "one precept I learned from the signora was, never to forget past benefits, and many are the obligations I owe to the countess of Ellesmere. Yet, in speaking of the signora, I cannot help thinking your ladyship severe to one who was so justly lavish in your praise. I have frequently heard the signora da Cortina remark, that out of Italy she never

saw a form so perfect in symmetry and grace—a face so resplendent in beauty and sweetness; lady Rosabel had not a more youthful countenance; yours indeed had the advantage—it was the soul of sensibility.”

“Who or what is this signora?” said the countess, smiling most graciously on the fair speaker.

“The only daughter of the marchese del Rio, abjured, deserted by her family, for unequal union. The signor da Cortina entered the Austrian service, and was killed in battle; and though not noble, left a richly-independent widow; but her illustrious family would never be reconciled—they abandoned her for ever. In France she became the bosom-friend of my mother, and received her last sigh. Careless of the censure of a misjudging world, the signora faithfully fulfilled the promise made to her dying friend, and never left her daughter: the heart of signora da Cortina was buried in the tomb
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of her husband; all censure and praise, but that of her own mind, was equally indifferent to her, who proved the steady friend of the orphan committed to her care."

"Envy and malice will have their day certainly; but we must respect appearances. I may hereafter be induced to change my opinion of this signora," and the temper of lady Ellesmere became harmonized almost to gaiety.

CHAPTER XII.

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### *The Marquis of Heatherly.*

"HERE I am, my sweet widow," said the marquis of Heatherly, as he dashed into the simply-elegant drawing-room of the signora da Cortina—"here I am, ready to obey your orders;" and he kissed, with



sudden familiarity, the ruby lips of the signora.

“ My first orders are, my lord,” and she spoke with cold dignity, “ that you behave as a gentleman, or my next shall be not to admit the marquis of Heatherly.”

“ What the deuce !” but he stopped, and only thought—“ this from the mistress of sir Charles Selwyn ! The free-and-easy of yesterday is the chaste Dian of to-day.—Fair lady, I am no satyr, come to enforce your love ; it was the kiss of peace, the kiss of brotherly affection—nothing more. Here is my written promise for ten thousand pounds, payable on the day of my marriage with Rosabel Melross.”

The grief, the agitation of the signora, was extreme.—“ Oh, how severely must the world judge of me, when the grandson of my most honoured friend believes me mercenary and impure !—Oh, Frances ! what have I not suffered to fulfil my promise to your dying mother, to preserve your purity, and guard you from every evil !

evil! But your conduct is my best eulogium; the relatives of your late husband do justice to the perfection of your purity, while the fair fame of her who reared this spotless rose of beauty is blasted by prejudice, bowed down by calumny."

The story of her promise to the dying lady Selwyn was now repeated—her widowed sorrows coloured with the magic pencil of grace and eloquence.—"Though lost to hope, to love, almost to fame, I yet can boast a heart keenly alive to gratitude; I revere, I almost worship the marchioness of Heatherly, and for her sake her favourite grandchild may command my services, feeble indeed, but faithful."

"To confess the truth, signora, I did not expect to meet you in such high heroics. I am accused of loving Rosabel Melross; I own the soft impeachment; the maid is passing fair, and most alluring is her splendid dower; but far more precious to my heart than beauty or than gold would be my triumph over lord Fitz-

auburne—to witness the disappointed cherished whimsy of his lordly father. My lord Fitzauburne, without any previous warning, jockeyed me completely out of a very pretty girl at Oxford, and I feel extremely anxious to return the compliment. I promised yesterday, signora, to repeat this college anecdote; you can then judge how hollow is that friendship whose glossy surface is so well calculated to deceive.

“ I am two years older than Fitzauburne. When he entered college, I broke loose from grandmamma’s apron-string, and went with him. Lord Coldbrook was astonished I could keep pace in learning with his Henry, who, though I could not beat out of the field, yet the race was even. Not far from the college stood a pastrycook’s shop; the man had a sour face and a surly temper, but his daughter had the bloom of Hebe and the smile of Euphrosyne; she looked heart-cheering mirth, and while she made pies I made love.

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“ At length I persuaded the fair Blowzabel there was more happiness in being the dressed-out dashing companion of a nobleman, than the beast of burthen, the domestic drudge yclept the wife of a haberdasher, who stood behind his uncle’s counter from morn till night, to ensure, by double drudgery, a sufficient sum to set up for himself; and then he expected Blowzy would marry him, and be a brain-crazed slave for life. Won to my wishes, she consented to meet me at midnight, a few yards from her father’s door. I had a carriage in waiting to take her off; but morning dawned, and no Blowzabel appeared. I returned home in no great harmony of temper, and left my servant to watch the door of old Puffendough: he returned in three hours, with the intelligence that my perjured Blowzabel had gone off with lord Fitzauburne; he had followed the carriage for some time till he was observed, and they were out of sight the next moment.

“ This

“This was no sweetener, and I was as acid-looking as old Puff, when, in an ill-omened hour, lord Coldbrook made his appearance. I answered his lordship’s inquiries for his son by repeating, without softening, the tale I had just heard. Lord Coldbrook all but fainted; but soon his waxen cheek glowed with the colour of a piony.—‘By Heaven!’ cried he, ‘it is false!—my Henry is no seducer. Come with me this moment to the father of the girl; a stain shall not rest, no, not for a moment, on his honour.’

“I attempted to take his arm, but he shook me off like a serpent, and we proceeded in gloomy silence to Pastry Hall. Old Vinegar was standing at the door, looking hideously agreeable. Lord Coldbrook civilly asked if he had seen his son, lord Fitzauburne, that morning? The man appeared ready to worship him, and I little expected to hear that lord Fitzauburne had given five hundred pounds to see Blowzy married to her old admirer,  
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the haberdasher; the little jade had confessed the planned elopement to her father, but the cruel spoiler she would not name. Lord Fitzauburne was so anxious for this marriage to take place, that he had brought her himself, in his own carriage, to the church.—‘God for ever bless him!’ continued the old man, with more emotion than I thought his withered heart capable of feeling.—‘he has saved my grey hairs from going down in sorrow to the grave. For you, my lord, I need not beg a blessing, though a poor man’s prayer may be acceptable in heaven. You have a son, who crowns the head of his father with honour: your lordship need not envy the king upon his throne.’

“The drawing up of Fitzauburne’s carriage made me draw off. I met my friend major Pakenham, who came that morning from London to visit me, to whom I told my story my own way: he consented to be the bearer of a message to lord Fitzauburne, evidently anxious to accommo-  
date

date the business without bloodshed. At six o'clock the next morning I went, accompanied by my friend, to the ground: lord Coldbrook was there, and alone; he looked the form and brow of courage, and I shrunk to nothing in his presence; severe he stood in manly beauty, and no lectured schoolboy ever got such a jobation; Pakenham joined chorus, and I was obliged to give my word of honour I would prosecute the affair no further.—‘I have made,’ continued the lordly earl, ‘your peace with Fitzauburne, who, tender of your reputation, would not suffer your name to be mentioned in this nefarious transaction; and may the vices and the follies of youth be forgotten in the virtues of the man!’

“His lordship then marched off with the dignity of an ancient Roman, while the tongue of Pakenham grew wanton in his praise. Not personally acquainted with either, the major addressed lord Coldbrook for his son, who looks only his elder brother,

brother, and thus was I foiled, lectured, and left to bear my disappointment as I might. Fitzauburne is every way triumphant; in six weeks he will be here, to claim, to wed his promised bride."

"May I ask your lordship," said the signora, with one of her most brilliant smiles, "which is most valued by lord Coldbrook—the deer park or the lady? The wishes of lord Fitzauburne are evidently bounded by the will of his father: the Grove is part of Rosabel's marriage-portion, if it please her father, not otherwise. What a pity," continued the signora, "such a beautiful demesne should be laid waste, to gratify an idle whim, equally useless and destructive! The duchess of Dunbane, who has no residence of her own, is so partial to the Grove, where she received the plighted vows of her deeply-regretted lord, that she would give double the purchase-money to secure the possession of it. Gratitude to her maternal friend, the marchioness,



marchioness, can scarcely be called a minor motive, for, in securing your lordship's happiness, that of the lady dowager is complete: the Grove once separated from the portion of lady Rosabel, you will find no competitor for her hand in lord Fitz-auburne."

"The object of all this manœuvring," thought the marquis, "is to make this delectable duchess the wife of Fitz-auburne, purely to break his father's heart;" and lord Heatherly veiled his eyes with his hand, that their sparkling indignation might not be seen. "But lord Ellesmere will not break faith and honour with his brother, signora; his lordship will not treat the memory of his father with so much disrespect, as to violate the promise made by him to lord Coldbrook."

"The actions of the living cannot disturb the tranquillity of the dead, nor can he be accused of broken faith who never made a promise. No conversation has  
passed

passed between the brothers-in-law on the subject since the death of the late earl of Ellesmere."

"My case is not then hopeless; but shadows, clouds, and darkness, rest upon it."

"Let the brilliant sun of hope dispel those murky vapours from your brain, and happy certainty chase far away each shadowy doubt and fear: doubt is too often the companion of faithful love."

"Bear with me, sweet signora, and say how this blissful vision may be realized—how Rosa, lovely Rosa, can be mine; for yet I doubt—I fear lord Ellesmere may believe himself honourably bound by the promise of his father."

"He wills it otherwise—his will is law; who has the right, the power, to control the actions of lord Ellesmere? The veneration of his lordship for high-sounding titles is well known; that of his great grandfather would have remained unsought for ever by the late earl, who  
sought

sought and obtained it merely to gratify the ambition of his son. Since the marriage of lady Geraldine Melross, lord Ellesmere has reflected with great bitterness on the difference of the wedded rank of his daughters; a viscountess by courtesy is scarcely beyond that of a commoner, while marchioness of Heatherly would combine in his own immediate family every title beneath royalty." The signora then gently hinted what the ardent entreaties of the marquis obliged her to confess, that the writings were now preparing which would secure possession of the Grove, in a few days, to the beautiful widow, but thought it unnecessary to repeat that the duchess had left no wish of lord Ellesmere's ungratified, to secure her fancied power over lord Coldbrook and his son, while love was the only coin accepted by the enamoured earl; profuse in his acknowledgments, the signora smiled on her willing dupe; and the marquis entreated his beautiful friend would solve the enigma,

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ma, how she became acquainted with the secret of his heart.

The ravings of delirium were manufactured into proofs strong as holy writ, which the marquis firmly believed were the fertile effusions of her own brain. The hand of the marquis again veiled his countenance, and he remained for some time in deep thought.—“ I see no necessity for me to remain here, signora, when you can manage so well without me; my proper station is now to bask in the sunbeam of Rosa’s beauty, and win her love from Henry. Make my excuses, lovely signora, at the Grove; I shall set off instantly for Scotland, and love and hope be the companions of my way! I am poor in compliment, but rich in gratitude; the signora da Cortina may command, at all times, the best services of George Heatherly, though language is denied him to express the feelings of his heart,” and the marquis pressed the beautiful hand of the  
signora

signora to his lips, with all the respect due to a sovereign princess.

Completely absorbed in his own reflections, the marquis became unconscious of all around him, as he proceeded on his way to Elmwood Castle. The unpleasant reverie of his lordship was disturbed by a gentleman taking hold of his arm, and the next moment he welcomed the return of major Pakenham to England.—“ My dear Pakenham, to what lucky chance do I owe the happiness of meeting you in this country, when I believed you to be in India?”

“ Ill health occasioned my return—I was ordered home to my native air. I have been in England only six weeks, and am now on a visit in this neighbourhood, and was proceeding to seek you at Elmwood Castle. How did your noble-minded uncle receive his penitent?”

“ Exactly as you foretold—with kindness, with affection. I left my servant  
and

and horses at the inn, and walked, sad and solitary, up the avenue through which I used to dash, confident of heart-cheering welcome; my uncle was pacing the lawn, deep in thought, with a countenance as sad and heavy as his footstep; Henry was leaning listlessly against a tree, carving on the bark G. H. in every shape and form, sighing heavily as he finished every letter. Lord Coldbrook broke the heavy silence — ‘ Henry, we must go and seek your cousin; he will not, I fear, seek us; he must not be left to the misery of his own reflections, or suffered to lose them in the vortex of dissipation. I have been cruelly harsh—unreasonably severe; I should have recollected his high spirit, I should have remembered it was his first fault: my heart bleeds when I reflect on my own bitterness—devoid of mercy was my reproof.’—‘ And I too have been to blame,’ cried Fitzauburne; ‘ I should have respected his feelings, gently convinced his noble mind of error, and not clandestinely  
rob

rob him of the power of being just to the nobler sentiments, the more honourable feelings of his heart. Let us seek him, my father, and that instantly.'

"I advanced, and suddenly stood between these incomparable relatives; my hand was grasped by each with fond affection; the brilliant eyes of lord Coldbrook sparkled with pleasure.—'Welcome, my much-loved boy, to your severe but paternal friend; my own Henry is scarcely dearer to my heart;' while Fitzauburne pressed my hand upon his throbbing heart, which beat to bid me welcome.—'The prodigal,' said I, 'is returned, conscious of his errors; pardon my offences, forgive my frailty; I will endeavour to sin no more.'

"Sweet was the praise which flowed from the eloquent lips of lord Coldbrook, as he portrayed the triumph of reason and virtue over vice and folly. I blushed beneath the burden of his praise, and honestly confessed to whose friendship I owed

owed my present restoration to happiness—that you never left me till I consented to seek a reconciliation with those friends I had so deeply offended.—‘Where or when did you meet with this most excellent young man?—I never heard of him till—’ I filled up the pause.—‘Till the serpent you fostered in your bosom was ready to sting you to death.’—‘Oh! no, no!’ cried Henry; ‘you would not, could not have the heart to injure me.—Worlds could not bribe me to raise my hand against your life: mutual have been our errors, mutual be our forgiveness.’

“I told my uncle of our accidental meeting in Devonshire, and the firm attachment which took place between us; that you were but two days in London, when your visit to Oxford proved your friendship and my own unworthiness. The next day lord Coldbrook’s travelling carriage was at the door.—‘My two boys,’ said his lordship, ‘must assist their father to prevail on this most excellent young officer to spend some  
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peace of Heatherly, no longer a victim to hopeless love for Rosabel Melross, would be happily restored, and lord and lady Ellesmere are perfectly convinced the rank of marchioness is more eligible for their daughter than viscountess by courtesy. Fitzauburne may be as whiteheaded as a turnip before he becomes an earl.'—'I pray Heaven,' cried I aloud, 'that both our heads may be white as Alpine snows, before we are separated from our guardian friend, this best of men, his father!' and little flattering were the epithets I bestowed in great abundance, not only on the signora, but on her dupe, my grandmother; I raved on till my breath was quite exhausted, when, changing my position, I observed Henry and Rosa looking at me in mute wonder; arm-in-arm they stood, innocent of evil, and beautiful as our first parents before the fall; and I reflected on the signora, as the serpent ready to destroy their happiness.—'My dear Heatherly,'

therly,' cried Fitzauburne, ' what has excited you so dreadfully ? I never saw you in such a rage—never.'

" I placed the horrid letter in his hand, and as he read, the trembling Rosabel clung more closely to his side, as if to secure protection. With all the energy of entreaty I urged the necessity of a private marriage ; but the filial piety of both revolted at the idea. My patience and my eloquence became equally exhausted ; I snatched up a Bible which lay near me (for this heart-rending scene took place in the library), and solemnly swore never to take food or rest till I saw them married. Terrified at my violence, they acceded to my wishes, as Fitzauburne acknowledged, to preserve me from insanity.

" Thus having secured them from being separated by any earthly power, I determined to ascertain on what pretext my ideal love for Rosabel was formed. I left Scotland the next morning, and proceeded to the Grove. When I entered the draw-

ing room, I saw the signora da Cortina, the well-known mistress of sir Charles Selwyn, seated on the same sofa with the heretofore essence of prudery, lady Ellesmere, in deep conversation. My steady gaze suffused the cheeks of her ladyship with crimson blushes, every moment increased her confusion, and at length obliged her to leave the room.

“ I seemed not to perceive the distress or confusion my unexpected appearance had occasioned, but took the vacant seat.—‘ Lovely signora, you have read my heart; but how or when, is an enigma I must entreat to be explained.—I thought my love, my ardent love for Rosabel, confined solely to my own bosom; but from this precious letter I have gathered the blissful hope that this my ardent love may not be always hopeless: realize this vision of love and hope, and bind me your slave for ever.’

“ I pressed the beautiful hand of the signora to my lips with less respect than gallantry,

gallantry, yet her polished brow remained unruffled by displeasure, and the witching smile of allurements rested on her ruby lip. The signora fixed her dark penetrating eyes on my countenance, but I was prepared for the scrutiny—Lavater himself could not read my thoughts.—‘That letter,’ said the soft-toned siren, ‘productive of so much happiness to your lordship, has caused the deepest mental anguish to your idolizing grandmother, my most honoured friend, who, by a fortunate negligence, I will now call it, gave to your lordship’s hand what never was intended for your lordship’s perusal. Your high-souled honour, your steady friendship for the lord Fitzauburne——’

“I hastily stopped the fast-flowing current of eloquent deception, well calculated no doubt to make the worse appear the better reason.—‘It is generally believed, signora, that Fitzauburne and I are bound in the fondest ties of fraternal affection for each other; but mutual dislike is the soft-

best appellation I can give our real sentiments; his treatment of me at college I can never forget—that he is my successful rival in love I can never forgive.’—‘If your lordship will honour my humble cottage with your presence to-morrow, we can converse on this subject next your heart with greater freedom and less danger of interruption.’—‘Will you promise to solve the enigma, signora?’ and I kissed, without offence, her beautiful cheek.—How fascinating was the smile which accompanied the words!—‘Your lordship may command the best services of Eugenia da Cortina, the much-honoured friend of the marchioness of Heatherly.’

“Grandmamma now entered, with lord and lady Ellesmere. “All’s well,” was legibly written on the countenance of the Italian; of course I was welcomed and caressed by the whole party. Through the day I behaved with that changeful kind of character which a man displays who hopes, yet dreads, what to-morrow may bring

bring forth; we all played our parts to perfection, every one believing themselves the best deceiver.

"This morning I went to the cottage of the signora da Cortina, where costly splendour was combined with studied simplicity. The signora was reclining on a Grecian sofa; looking almost as young and lovely as her pupil; the air was perfumed with the most odoriferous flowers placed in rich china vases, and all the witchery of allurements breathed around this Paphian queen, whom I thought it unnecessary to address as a virgin of the sun; but Diana of the Ephesians was a nymph of Circassia compared to this icicle of chastity. After some good acting on both sides, I got the intelligence I wanted."

The marquis then repeated his conversation with the signora, and the major agreed with his friend that lord Fitzaurburne was the real object of all this manœuvring.—"Yet why should lord Ellesmere part with the Grove?—his lordship

is too wealthy to make it an act of necessity ; he might have denied the gift, without adding insult to injury."

The burning blushes of the marquis grew deeper every moment ; his voice was low and hurried.—“ Lord Ellesmere is enamoured of the duchess ; the poisoned cup of Circe has transformed his nature ; the loss of virtue and of honour is repaid by the harlot smile of this worthy pupil of Da Cortina ; and the artful wanton hopes to secure the hand of Henry, who is unconscious of the unhallowed love she bears him. I have watched the changeful colour of her cheek at his approach, and the next moment saw her accept the devoted attentions of his uncle. The instant I read that vile letter, the whole truth rushed on my mind at once, and the open dislike evinced by lord Coldbrook for this siren has stimulated her endeavours to make him wretched. Thank Heaven ! no human power can now divide the wedded lovers. At eighteen, Rosabel is mistress  
of

of her hand and fortune; till then, should concealment be necessary, as the lover accepted by her father, I will guard the wife of Henry with a brother's care.

“ I openly acknowledged my *fancied* love for Rosabel, to foil the machination of that infamous signora, who might spirit hither some Italian duke or marquis, and the gentle girl be persecuted by their mercenary addresses. But who shall dare to persecute, and I her guardian friend?—Her infatuated father I consider as a plastic automaton in the hands of these Circean harpies, under whose guidance faith, virtue, and honour, have fled from him for ever. How degrading is vice! how dreadful the empire of unbridled passion over the human heart!—step by step it leads to the fathomless abyss of ruin.

“ Have I not reason to bless the wholesome severity of my guardian friend, who crushed at once the blossoms of evil in my heart, never, oh! never to return? It was my intention, before we met, to proceed



directly to Wales, and inform my uncle of every circumstance, except the marriage of Fitzauburne, who severely dreads the displeasure of his father, hurried as he was into this union by the actual frenzy which possessed me; but he wishes to leave the actions of lord Coldbrook unfettered, and would prefer waiting till lady Rosabel is of age, if the disclosure could wound the peace of his father, before time ameliorates the indignant feelings of his heart, at the worthless and dishonourable conduct of lord Ellesmere."

"Oh! go, my dear marquis—go directly to your uncle; every moment of delay is dangerous. Perhaps his lordship may arrive here in time to prevent lord Ellesmere from sealing his own dishonour for ever. I will remain in the neighbourhood till your return. Your lordship has only to command my services to secure them."

The hatchment over the door of Lewellyn Castle told the work of death was over.—"At what an hour," thought the agitated

agitated young man, " am I here, to add affliction to sorrow !"

The colourless cheek, the heavy eye of lord Coldbrook, told the mental misery he endured ; and the melancholy smile which bid him welcome, agonized the feeling heart of his young relative.

" My Henry," said the earl, " is now nearly as rich a man as his father ; he is the heir of my lamented uncle, who did not forget his favourite George Heatherly : he has left you twenty thousand pounds, which, with the savings of ten years' minority, will leave your estate free from all encumbrance. I hope the lamentations of the marchioness will now cease, and that Fitzanburne will no longer be envied, for your sake, his long-promised bride."

The feelings of the marquis were now agony beyond endurance. — " Oh, my uncle ! to your paternal care I owe the preservation of my fortune and my principles ; but for you, all had been lost. Yet  
I come

I come here to——” The feelings of the marquis overpowered his manly pride, already subdued by agitation and want of rest, and leaning on the shoulder of his uncle, he burst into tears.

“ Merciful Heaven! what has happened? Is Rosabel, is Henry dead? Something dreadful must have occasioned this womanish weakness, never before witnessed in the strong-nerved, stout-hearted Heatherly.

“ Thank Heaven it is no worse,” said the earl, as he heard the communication made by his nephew; “ I must only remain content with the park, which your grandmother has so often told me was sufficiently large for fifteen earls of Ellesmere. If I do not survive the present earl, Henry I know will fulfil the wishes of his great-grandfather—the promise made him by me. My poor boy must wait another year to claim his bride, happy she is guarded by the soul of honour in his cousin. I will write to lord Ellesmere,

mere, with little hope indeed of success, for the crafty Italian would never have revealed the secret, if the writings were not already signed. But she shall know that the father of Henry will not barter the happiness of his child for any self-gratification. Without seeming to doubt his honour, I will inform the earl of the large heirship of Fitzauburne, and the last request of Mr. Lewellyn, that his marriage might not be delayed; I will leave him no pretext to break off this union. Marquis of Somerton was a very ancient title in my mother's family; it would have been confirmed to my uncle, had he lived; and I make no doubt I shall readily obtain it for Henry, as his immediate heir.

“To leave Lewellyn Castle before the benevolent owner is removed for ever from its walls, Heatherly, it cannot be; if lord Ellesmere will act with dishonour, I will not with ingratitude; my writing will more effectually serve our purpose, for I will be so guarded that the most fastidious

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ous cannot make a pretext for faith and honour to be broken. Yet I am well convinced that Henry must wait till Rosabel is mistress of her own actions; to Heaven and your guardian care he must till then resign her.

“Frances of Dunbane, sooner than Fitz-auburne should be your wedded lord, I would fold the shroud over his faultless form, and follow him to the grave, rejoicing that he had escaped the contamination of your embrace—that he was restored, spotless as infancy, to the bosom of his Creator.

“I sent by express for Henry, when those benevolent eyes were closed for ever, which had so often rested on his youthful face with paternal pride and exultation; my poor boy returned twice to say farewell, before he obeyed the gentle, though firm command of his uncle, to meet his bride in Scotland; he will now return to see him in his coffin.”

The morning after the funeral of Mr.  
Lewellyn,

Lewellyn, the expected letter came from lord Ellesmere; it was cold, civil, determined, and, without any assigned cause, firmly rejected the alliance of lord Fitz-auburne for his daughter, and ended with the commonplace civility of a casual acquaintance.

“Prophetic were my feelings; Frances Selwyn,” said lord Coldbrook, “the serpent, has destroyed our paradise of sweets, and dissevered our firm compact of family affection. Ill-fated Ellesmere! oh, why have you forced me to pity, to despise you?”

The same post brought a letter from major Pakenham; the marquis glanced hastily over, then gave it to lord Coldbrook.—“I must go to Scotland,” and the marquis left the room, to give the necessary orders for his departure. The letter mentioned lord Ellesmere and his family were to leave Cumberland the following morning, and with them the duchess of Dunbane and signora da Cortina.—“Their destination

destination I did not hear; but where they go I follow, till it is ascertained, or your presence makes my services no longer necessary. Lord Ellesmere no doubt will expect to meet your lordship at Elgin Castle."

"This young man," said lord Coldbrook, "stranger as he is, seems to be our protecting angel. Henry Percival Pakenham!" continued the earl—"he bears our family name, and yet I never heard of any intermarriage between a Percival and a Pakenham."

"What is still more extraordinary, he bears a strong resemblance to us both. The first time I saw him, I was too much agitated to remark whether his complexion was black or brown; I thought his manners gentlemanly, and he seemed more inclined to sooth than irritate. But the next morning, when he walked towards me with Heatherly, I thought at first sight it was you, his person was so exactly similar; his complexion and his hair are darker,  
but

but he might pass any where for your brother: in speaking, I heard my own voice echoed; his sentiments too were the same, softened indeed in the expression, as he endeavoured to convince his juvenile friend of error, himself as youthful in appearance."

"My dear Heatherly," said the earl, as he pressed the hand of his nephew at parting, "bear our most grateful acknowledgments to your excellent friend; entreat him to give us the consolation of his society here at Lewellyn Castle—to Elmwood I return no more till Henry is the husband of Rosabel."

Remorse clouded the brow and filled the bosom of lord Ellesmere with disquietude as he entered the cottage of signora da Cortina; but the smiles, the caresses of the beautiful Frances, chased far away every throb of honour which still lingered at his heart. As the fair widow read the letter of lord Coldbrook, her feelings were almost too mighty for concealment; Fitz-auburne,



auburne, richly independent, high in rank, her wedded lord, was the imagery which glowed with vivid brightness on her fancy; pomp, power, and greatness, followed in all this train of happiness supreme.—“Be still, my heart,” thought the soft-eyed siren, as she mildly remarked the rank of lord Heatherly was already secure—his fortune, now free from encumbrance, greatly superior to that of lord Fitzauburne, whose increased rank might only decorate the fancy of his father.—“But is it really your intention, my lord, to go to Ireland, as lady Ellesmere mentioned to me this morning?”

“My cousin, lord Glenfield, goes there in a few days as lord-lieutenant, and is anxious we should bear him company. I have consented, provided it meets the approbation of the ladies; from you, my sweet Frances, I cannot part. My Louisa has consented to receive the signora as her guest while we remain in Ireland.”

“Will lady Ellesmere—will she really  
and

and indeed?" cried the exulting Frances. "Oh, my dear, dear lord! how did you prevail?"

"Partly to gratify the wishes of the marchioness, partly by a large present, the alleged purchase-money of the Grove, the countess was induced to grant our united request. Going to Ireland will effectually separate Henry and Rosabel, and I have no doubt she will return, in a few months, marchioness of Heatherly. In the arrangements for the former union of Rosabel I was scarcely consulted; my father and lord Coldbrook had every thing their own way. The marquis was always my decided favourite, independent of his rank, which is no feather in the scale of worldly estimation. Lady Ellesmere and the marchioness are so wretched at the idea of my meeting with lord Coldbrook (which certainly I do not wish at present), that I have consented to leave Cumberland in a few days; and while you remain with the marchioness

charitable visit to lord Coldbrook, you can tell him our destination; it is useless for me to write till we are landed in this island of bogs and bears."

Major Pakenham gained daily on the affection of lord Coldbrook and his son; lord Fitzauburne could speak to him without reserve of his wedded Rosabel, and anticipate the happy hour when concealment would be no longer necessary; while lord Coldbrook was determined to believe there was a relationship, which he vainly endeavoured to trace.—"I never rightly heard, major," said the earl, after musing a long time on this subject one morning, "how your acquaintance with Heatherly commenced. You first met somewhere, I believe, in Devonshire?"

"It was, my lord; the estate I inherit from my father is situated in Devonshire. About a year ago, I was walking on a part of the demesne, divided only by a low hedge from a bridle-road seldom frequented; a gentleman bounded lightly over the fence,

fence, glowing with health and animation —it was the marquis of Heatherly.—‘ Hal, my dear fellow,’ seizing both my hands, which he shook with great cordiality, ‘ I never was more delighted to see you in my life. To please your good papa, I came here to visit my aunt Chedwyn; to please myself, I will go home to-morrow. She is as bitter as gall and wormwood—as sour as vinegar and verjuice, surrounded by a parcel of hypocritical harridans and grim-visaged Methodist preachers. So off we go to-morrow, Hal—that’s poz.—What the deuce ails you, Harry?’ continued his lordship. ‘ Do I look like a ghost? Why don’t you speak?’—I now lamented I had not the honour of his acquaintance.—‘ My lord Fitzauburne,’ said the marquis, ‘ if you don’t choose to recollect me, because I wont remain among a canting, hypocritical, Methodistical set, that I despise, I can’t help it; but I wont stay here, no, not even to please your father, my lord Fitzauburne;’ and the mar-

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quis made a very low bow.—I took off my hat, and bowed in return.—‘What fancy took you,’ cried he, running his fingers rapidly through my hair, ‘to wear a black wig?’

“Astonishment and confusion were the mingled expression of his lordship’s countenance, as he fixed his brilliant eyes on my face.—‘I may be mistaken,’ and the marquis looked really bewildered.—‘I beg your pardon, sir,’ continued he, deeply blushing, ‘I took you for my cousin, lord Fitzauburne. I am the marquis of Heatherly; will you have the goodness to pardon my curiosity, and tell me who you really are?’ Some complimentary speeches passed on both sides, and I prevailed on the marquis to spend a fortnight with me at Pakenham Hall.”

“Have you any relations in that part of the country—I mean Devonshire?” asked lord Coldbrook.

“No, my lord; nor any where else, that I know of. In Emerton churchyard may be  
be

be seen the tomb of Horace and Lydia Packenham; I was their only surviving child, and lost both my parents before I was ten years old. I inherit a clear estate of three thousand pounds a-year. An old clergyman in the neighbourhood was my guardian, who either could not or would not tell to what family I belonged."

A few minutes after, the major drew out his handkerchief, and a letter fell to the ground, directed to lord Coldbrook,—  
"This is for me," said his lordship, as he took it up.

"On my honour, and on my soul," cried the major, his face crimsoned with confusion, "I know not how it came there, or who it is from."

Lord Coldbrook smiled good-humouredly at his earnest anxiety, and said the letter would speak for itself.

"My lord Coldbrook," it began, "you are very anxious to know who Percy Packenham really is. To spare your conjectures, he is heir to an earldom—your lordship's

ship's near relation ; seek no further, or he shall be removed far from you, till he is publicly acknowledged by his family."

"Very concise and very dictatorial," said his lordship ; "but, my dear young friend, I will subscribe to any terms that can secure me so valued a relative. Have you any suspicion who the writer really is?"

"Not in the least, though my constant correspondent for more than twelve years. The letters, which are placed either on my pillow or in my pocket, by what means I know not, are sometimes flattering, frequently abusive, but the hand of affection is legible in every line ; and the next day they vanish, despite my most anxious care, with the same secrecy I receive them. On the death of my parents, I was sent to Scotland for education, and at seventeen I left the college of Edinburgh, by command of my invisible guardian, and entered a dragoon regiment quartered in the neighbourhood. My promotion was rapid ; at twenty-one I was a major, but whether  
by

by interest or purchase I am equally ignorant—I was ordered to make no inquiries. Two years ago I had a severe fit of illness, and remained delirious for several days; when I awoke to recollection, I heard the heavy sob of anguish—“Oh, doctor! must I lose him?” said a voice, evidently that of a gentleman—“must I lose my boy, the pride of my existence?”—“My lord, my lord,” cried the impatient physician, “if you awake him from this critical slumber, he may be to-morrow in his coffin. Remember your sacred promise to his great-grandfather; you cannot acknowledge your nephew till he is twenty-three. I expected not this womanish wailing from your lordship.”—“Oh, Solomon the wise!” he replied, with great bitterness—“mail-clad heart of philosophy! you have no idolized boy to lose, to prove the power of nature over the dogmas of philosophic art;” and as he left the room, his heart seemed bursting with agony.”

“Though it is a forbidden subject,” said  
lord



lord Coldbrook, "for once I will hazard a conjecture:—Your servants are deep in this friendly plot against you."

"That, my lord, is quite impossible; I have but one; since the sickbed scene I am much more amenable, and gave up every idea of keeping any kind of carriage till I am three-and-twenty. This man carried me, when an infant, in his arms; he is the most attached of human beings, and has neither the wish or the ability to deceive me. An orphan boy, reared by my father—Irish, I suppose, from his name O'Dowd—has been my companion from infancy to manhood; we were clothed and educated with equal care, and I have every reason to believe we are nearly allied by blood; but the difference in our rank was so firmly implanted in his youthful mind by my father's steward, that I have never been able to force or allure him into equality: he is modest as brave, high-spirited as humble; his simplicity untinged by folly, his single-heartedness I never yet  
saw

saw equalled, and his belief in supernatural agency is as firm as his faith in holy writ. On this young man, for whom I feel the fond affection of an only brother, my errors, my every act of disobedience to the despotic will of my secret guardian, are revenged with all the promptness of magic power; my poor O'Dowd is exiled, because I would make this visit to your lordship. The morning before I left Richmond, a note was placed on my pillow; it was more than usually abusive, and mentioned one tormenting puppy was quite sufficient at a time to obtrude upon lord Coldbrook—Mr. O'Dowd should visit a very different kind of castle. This was no idle threat; I hastily arose, but O'Dowd was no where to be found. I have never seen him since."

"Is your guardian, the old clergyman, still alive?"

"No, my lord; he died last spring, and with him every hope of ascertaining to what

what family I belong, till my secret and tyrannic guardian thinks proper to reveal it."

END OF VOL. I.

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# THE IRISH NECROMANCER.

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## CHAPTER I.

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### *The Land of Bogs and Bears.*

ON a fine September morning, the royal yacht entered the Bay of Dublin, which scarcely yields pre-eminence in beauty and magnificence to the far-famed Bay of Naples. The distinction with which his cousin, lord Glenfield, was received as lord lieutenant of Ireland, flattered the ambitious pride of lord Ellesmere; and with self-gratulation he entered the house in Merion-square prepared for his reception.

As the marquis assisted lady Rosabel to  
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alight, a card was placed in his hand by a footman in handsome livery. On the card was written—"Secure the apartments immediately over the state drawing-room for lady Rosabel; her ladyship has powerful friends in this country, possessed of the ability and inclination to serve her. Marquis of Heatherly, this whole nation is not composed of bogs and bears."

"Have you any commands for me, my lord?" said the man, bowing. "My master, Mr. Hammersley, left me in charge of the house before he went to England, and his uncle, colonel O'Brien, desired I should see that every thing met the approbation of lord Ellesmere and his family."

"Without giving too much trouble, could I see the apartments mentioned in this card?"

"Oh! certainly, to be sure, my lord," replied the man, with evident delight, "if your lordship will have the condescension to walk up stairs."

On the second floor he stopped, and  
taking

taking a key from his bosom, ushered the marquis into a suite of apartments arranged with the nicest care; it seemed the work of fairy-gifted hands: a fine-toned piano, and a beautiful harp, were placed in the small though elegant sitting-room, and a selection of the best authors, ancient and modern, were arranged with tasteful care in a richly-ornamented recess. Nothing seemed wanting conducive to the comfort or amusement of lady Rosabel; sweet-scented exotics, which perfumed the apartment, lined the balconied window, and the most melodious singing-birds, in splendid cages, swelled their little throats, to harmonize the scene.

“This is a fairy palace,” cried the marquis; “little did I expect to meet anything like this in Ireland.”

The next moment he felt the folly of thinking aloud. A smile of ill-concealed exultation passed over the countenance of the attendant.—“If my lord marquis approves of these apartments, I may take the

liberty to bring up the waiting-maid and the band-boxes."

"You will greatly oblige me;" and the marquis endeavoured to place a bank-note of some value in his hand.

"The honour of pleasing the marquis of Heatherly," said the man, with a low bow, as he refused the present, "is quite sufficient reward. We Irish are too ignorant to be mercenary;" and the marquis was left to wonder and admire, at his first introduction to this, cursedest of all isles.

Lady Ellesmere and her party surveyed with amazement and delight the splendid range of apartments beneath; the sofas and chairs of the state drawing room were of painted velvet, the frames richly gilt and ornamented; costly mirrors and beautiful paintings nearly covered the walls, and Persian carpets and silken drapery were disposed with rich and gay luxuriance. On this floor were the state bedchamber, and richly-decorated dressing-rooms.

The

The reflections of the marquis were disturbed by the entrance of lady Rosabel's woman, followed by several strange servants, who placed the trunks as she directed, and instantly disappearing, the first attendant only remained.

“My lord, might I take the liberty to advise your lordship just to lock the door. I am sure this young lady would have no objection to stay by herself for a few minutes, just till the old and the young lady dowager, and the lady governess, have chosen their own apartments. I hear them going through the rooms, and the young duchess would make no apology for turning lady Rosabel out of this; and that would grieve more hearts than one, my lord marquis of Heatherly.”

“ If it was only to gratify you, my good fellow, she shall not. I feel infinitely grateful, on the part of my sweet Rosabel, to you and your kind employers; bear them my most thankful acknowledgments.



ments. I am grieved you will not accept from me thanks more substantial than words."

As the marquis entered the drawing-room, lady Rosabel was leaning over the balcony. A heavy shower had washed the leaves of the flourishing evergreens planted in the centre of the square : they now appeared in rich luxuriance, and gave additional beauty to the regular and elegant square they ornamented ; and the marquis joined his cousin in praising the unexpected splendour and beauty of all around them.—" So much for hearsay and belief," said the marquis. " I shall beg leave to judge for myself in future—ocular demonstration shall only convince me."

Lady Ellesmere and her companions now made their appearance in high good humour.—" We have chosen the sweetest apartments for you, Heatherly," said the marchioness ; " the dressing-room is so light and elegant, the bedchamber so airy and

and comfortable ; indeed we are all suited to our utmost wishes.”

“ And where are Rosabel’s ?” said the marquis.

Every one was silent.

“ I declare,” said lady Ellesmere, carelessly, “ she was quite forgotten. All the apartments on that range are disposed of. I dare say she can be made quite comfortable somewhere ; young girls must not be fastidious.”

“ Oh, certainly not,” said lord Ellesmere. “ I make no doubt Rosa can be very well accommodated on the upper story.”

The eyes of the marquis sparkled with indignant fire.—“ My sweet Rosa, though forgotten by father and mother, your lover bore you fondly in his remembrance ; you shall not be turned up to the garret, to make room for,” and he fixed his intelligent eyes, with an expression they could not mistake, on the signora and her pupil, “ for strangers ; as every one is so happily accommodated to their wishes, they can-

not envy the selection I have made for you, which I will not yield to please the varying fancy of any human being. My lord Ellesmere," continued he, with increased haughtiness, "allow me half-an-hour's conversation; in the one your lordship indulged me with at Richmond, I was too happy to be wise. I forgot many things which I have since reflected on, and now wish to mention."

Lord Ellesmere, awed by his manner, followed the marquis in silence to an adjoining apartment.

"My lord," he began, "when your lordship confirmed my happiness, by accepting me as your future son-in-law, I had no suspicion that my bride was to be associated with the mistress of sir Charles Selwyn; neither did I attempt to investigate your lordship's actions relative to her pupil, Fanny Selwyn. If lady Ellesmere is as blind or as stupid as a mule, that too is quite immaterial to me; her husband should be her safeguard from infamous society; but he

he is the best judge. I seek not to convince or to dictate, but, on my sacred honour, and on my soul! if they attempt to trample on or insult my Rosabel, whose yielding sweetness gives me every hope of success, I will tear away, with no gentle hand, the cobweb varnish which now veils the character of signora da Cortina, and I will lay the heart of her pupil bare to public scrutiny. Let them beware, nor seek to rouse the lion, who will not be offended with impunity, in the person of his affianced bride. Let it be peace or war; in peace they may both enjoy viceregal favour, and wear, undisturbed by me, the semblance of spotless purity: but my opinion is my own—at twenty-two I am no babe of softness. But I will pledge my honour, which has never yet been forfeited, if they offend not Rosabel, I will treat them both with the affectionate attention of a brother.”

Lord Ellesmere, too much agitated to reply, was left with every feeling of con-

tempt by his undaunted nephew. With pride in his port, defiance on his brow, the marquis of Heatherly returned to the ladies.—“Come, Rosabel, my fair one, come and see the selection your Heatherly has made, and the smile of innocence and beauty be the reward of my care.”

“Heatherly was quite in a royal rage,” remarked lord Ellesmere; “if he takes these tantrums often, it will be quite shocking. I declare I feel quite nervous.”

As the marquis opened the door of lady Rosabel’s apartment, the feathered choristers thrilled forth harmonious welcome, the soft breeze wafted around the balmy sweetness, and the entranced Rosabel could scarcely believe this scene of enchantment real. Her artless delight, her thankful gratitude, was unbounded.—“But I fear, my dear cousin, I shall be envied, tormented out of my sweet fairy bower.”

“Fear not, my gentle Rosa; to Heaven and my guardian care your Henry and his father have resigned you. This heart  
shall

shall cease to beat, this arm be powerless in death, when Heatherly is faithless to his trust."

"Pray, my lord," asked the countess, "can you inform me what new-fangled wisdom has entered the sapient skull of George Heatherly since he left Richmond? I declare it has made him quite disagreeable and impertinent."

"Heatherly, my Louisa, is a lover, and I must acknowledge we were rather neglectful of Rosabel." The expression of his lordship's countenance, as it met the inquiring eyes of the signora, was—we must conciliate.

"What a fuss," said the countess, fretfully, "there always was made about this girl, first by her grandfather, then by lord Coldbrook and his son, and now George Heatherly out-hectors them all! I declare his airs are downright intolerable. In the duke of Dunbane were combined rank and fashion, beauty and fortune, and his grace was married to my sweet Geraldine in a

few weeks, without any of this plague and proving."

The good humour of the marquis was completely restored, when he again entered the drawing-room. The signora addressed him with the softest humility.

"Your lordship, I hope, will do me the justice to believe I would not retain the apartments selected for me by my most honoured friend the marchioness, when I found the accommodation of lady Rosabel was forgotten."

"I should have been most happy," said the beautiful Frances, "to have shared mine with the sweet Rosabel. Surely my cousin Heatherly will pardon a fault so unintentional."

"Ladies fair," said the marquis, taking a hand of each, "you will never find me unforgiving; but where Rosabel is concerned, there indeed I shall always be revengeful and implacable; 'meddle not, make not,' and you may both command my attention, my protection, as a brother."

He

He raised the hand of each, and pressed them slightly to his lips, in token of present amity.

“What a graceful creature Heatherly is!” said the doting grandmother, and the next moment placed him between her and Lady Ellesmere.

The charms of his conversation, his well-timed flattery, dispelled every angry feeling in the bosom of the countess; and as she accorded the kiss of peace, called him the spoiled darling of the family.

A loud knocking at the door preceded the entrance of colonel O'Brien. He seemed about fifty years of age, and his appearance was that of a soldier and a gentleman; his complexion was embrowned by a ten years residence in India, and the large scar on his forehead added interest to his martial bearing, and proved him no carpet knight, as the noble openness of his manners proved he had mingled with the best society.

Lady Ellesmere, who now preferred any  
society



society to that of his nephew, was rejoiced at this new acquaintance, who declared himself to be the maternal uncle of Mr. Hammersley, the owner of the house his lordship now occupied; his nephew was a minor, and in England.

“ Unacquainted with courtly phrase and courtly etiquette, will lord and lady Ellesmere excuse the freedom of a camp-bred soldier, if I entreat their company to-day, and that of their family, to a friendly dinner? My house is next to this: Mrs. O'Brien and our little girl are with her brother, the earl of Dunleer, at Lucan. I hope the ladies will not reject the prayer of a solitary being, but give him one day of sunshine in her absence.”

The kindness of this friendly invitation was duly appreciated by lord Ellesmere and the marquis; and lady Ellesmere having ascertained she would meet no stranger but the colonel's only son, consented with great cheerfulness.

“ It was very obliging,” said the marchioness,

chioness, "for colonel O'Brien to ask us to-day. Murray was just lamenting her lady would be quite starved, the servants were so long making out where every thing was to be had."

## CHAPTER II.

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The Irish Baronet.

THE marquis marked the expression of colonel O'Brien's countenance as he bowed over the hand of Rosabel—it was pity, admiration, protection. That he was one of her secret friends, escaped not the penetration of his eagle eye, and he felt his heart dilate with thankfulness to the noble-looking veteran.

Lucius O'Brien, of whom his father was not a little vain, was a fine-looking young man, just of age; his manners were frank, yet

yet polished, and his open brow beamed with intelligence and good-humour. They were scarcely seated at dinner, when a great bustle was heard in the hall.

“ Hold your prate, ye puppy—hold your prate, I say !” exclaimed a voice, the nationality of which could not be mistaken. “ D’ye think I never sat among lords and ladies before, ye hound, ye ?”

“ But your worship’s coat looks so dusty—so full of mire, and your honour’s boots so scratched, just for all the world as if your worship rode a steeple chase.”

“ It was a fox-chase, ye whelp; and if my coat is a little soiled, who shall find fault with the lining? No English bug that ever came here to fatten on our corn and oil, has better blood in his veins than Arthur O’Dwyer;” and the next moment a tall muscular figure entered the room, dressed in a hunting-frock, which had once been scarlet, and boots, which bore the impression of many a brake and briar.

He took off a rusty black velvet hunt-
ing

ing-cap, ornamented with a fox's brush, and pitching it on the sideboard, strode up the room to colonel O'Brien—"How do you do, cousin Cornelius, how do you do? That Frenchified puppy, your servant, had no mind to let me in. I would have dusted his jacket, the hound, only I heard there were ladies in the parlour;" and he bowed most profoundly, kissing his hand at the same time.

The colonel now introduced his cousin, sir Arthur O'Dwyer, who took his station in high good-humour next the signora.

"Had you good sport to-day, sir Arthur?" asked young O'Brien; "as usual, you were out the first day of the hunting season, and, as usual, obtained the sportsman's trophy."

"Why yes, we had some good running; it was cursed hot though. It was like a day in June. I was in at the death at Chapelizod. As the chase was so soon over, cousin Cornelius, I thought I might ride on to tell you little Flora is quite recovered

covered of her cold, and that your good mamma, Lucius, is in good health, and almost as handsome as the day you were born, and I am very much obliged to my own good-nature for introducing me to such good company ;” and again sir Arthur bowed most profoundly—“I will hobnob with you in a glass of wine, if you please, ma’am.”

The signora bowed assent.

“ Love and friendship, and your very pretty health, ma’am,” and sir Arthur touched her glass with his own. “ That was the fashion when I was a youngster, and a much better fashion it is to my mind than grinning in a lady’s face with — ‘ Do me the honour, ma’am,’ looking all the time as much as to say, ‘ I’ll do *you* the honour, ma’am,’ while the wine is neither sweetened with the sentiment of love or friendship. If a man’s coat is cut in the fashion now-a-days, he may cut good manners like a poor relation ; and if his head is polished like a mahogany table,
it

it may be as hollow as his fashionable heart. The time was when men were ambitious to protect the ladies they loved, so innocent and blooming, who were neither choppers of logic or talkers of Latin, but looked up, as in duty bound, to their natural protectors with love and confidence ; but now the men, dressed out like milliners' dolls, look unable to protect themselves, while the ladies drive four-in-hand, like hackney-coachmen—scold away in Greek and Latin, and, egad ! to crown all, make no apology about wearing the pantaloons. Yet, faith ! I cannot blame them much, after all. When men throw away their dignity, and turn doll-dressers, the poor things must turn masculine, and protect themselves.—How do you like Ireland, ma'am ?” again addressing the signora ; “ did you expect to meet the natives, like the devil on two sticks, with hoofs and horns ? But they are not so bad, ma'am ; they have only wings, and highfliers
they

they often are in their own country; but when they fly off to England and other strange places, their wings are clipt; every feather is plucked out clear and clean, and they are sent home to reflect on their folly and their loss; they seldom can raise their pinions, or ever fly again. In my mind, it is great folly to leave one's own country, to be pigeoned and despised in another."

Sir Arthur remained for some time silent, and fixed his eyes with deep interest and much kindness on lady Rosabel; the moment he saw the marquis observed him, he spoke to the signora—"As you are a stranger here, ma'am, I will have great pleasure in shewing you the squares and the buildings. We have two or three fine panoramas here now, ma'am, and though I wont be a very fashionable squire, ma'am, yet Arthur O'Dwyer is very well known in the streets of Dublin, and it will not lessen your consequence to be seen in his company, ma'am."

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The signora told him, with great sweetness, she was at the disposal of the marchioness.

“An old lady might be a little curious as well as a young one, so I will ask the pleasure of her company when I am asking leave for you, ma’am; for I intend to pay my respects to my lord Ellesmere to-morrow, as he is a stranger, and to my lord the marquis, too, ma’am, who, though he is dressed in the pink of the fashion, looks like a *man*, and takes as much care of that beautiful child beside him as a hen of a pet chicken.”

The marchioness and lady Ellesmere now arose. Sir Arthur took the hand of the signora, and led her to the door. With uncouth gallantry he kissed the beautiful hand at parting, pressed both his own on his heart, and made a most profound bow.

Lady Ellesmere, who had been flattered into great harmony of temper by Lucius O’Brien, rallied the signora on her conquest—“Young O’Brien says he has seven
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ven thousand a-year, and the most benevolent heart in the world."

"And such lovely manners! and such a voice!" said the soft-toned Frances.

"What signifies his voice," said the literal marchioness; "I am sure he said nothing uncivil or improper. He would be very well-looking if his face was well washed, and his figure is far from indifferent, if he was dressed like any decent Christian; a good heart and a good fortune are not to be met with every day, signora, and, like his countryman, sir Lucius O'Trigger, he will make you the best husband in the world."

"And lady O'Dwyer into the bargain, signora," said the highly-amused Frances.

When sir Arthur made his appearance in the drawing-room, he walked with great steadiness to the signora—"You see, ma'am, I could walk a plank if the carpet was off. It was a rule, when I was a youngster, never to come top-heavy into the company of ladies; it was reckoned a
very

very ungentlemanlike action; but now free and easy is the mode; to my mind, the more we get on in civilization, the further we leave common civility behind: and now, ma'am, if you please, I will just go over and ask the old lady if she will take a walk or a ride to-morrow, whichever is most agreeable;" and off went sir Arthur.

The marchioness received him with civility almost amounting to respect.

"I came from that very pretty and very dutiful lady, yonder, just to ask you, my lady, if you would like to take a walk or a ride any where to-morrow; my lady, I am sure I would be happy to attend you, my lady."

"I really do not know, sir Arthur, what arrangements lord Ellesmere has made for to-morrow; but I shall feel happy at all times to see sir Arthur O'Dwyer."

"As you are so agreeable, my lady, I will call to-morrow, go or stay; a day sooner or later makes no difference in life."

Sir Arthur then returned, and stationed himself

himself by the signora for the remainder of the evening.

“I wish,” said lord Ellesmere, when alone the next morning with the marchioness and his lady, “the signora was married to this Irish baronet; he has a fine estate, and she cannot now be fastidious. It would secure her that rank in life to which she is now only partially restored, and make her triumph complete over her vile calumniators. You, marchioness, and my Louisa, will, I know, use every exertion to secure the permanent happiness of this most amiable and ill-treated woman, whose gratitude is as boundless as her merit. The difficulty will arise, I am certain, solely on her own part; and to confess the truth, I am anxious for the speedy completion of her union with the enamoured baronet, as lord Orlington took every unlicensed liberty of speech with regard to the signora when we were coming over, though I can see very clearly he has matrimonial

matrimonial views on her beautiful pupil."

"I dare say her fortune would be very convenient to him at present," said the countess; "he is a fool and a fright; but I think, my lord, you should not suffer lord Orlington to be impertinent. My company was always as select as that of his sister, my lady Glenfield, and I shall tell her so. The signora was always too meek and too gentle not to be trampled on by the bronzed-faced ladies of fashion: I believe the signora da Cortina to be as spotless as the snowdrop of purity she has reared, Frances of Dunbane."

Soon after, a note come from lady Glenfield, requesting to see the countess immediately.

"I shall not stir a step," said her ladyship, "till I see sir Arthur O'Dwyer; his family has been uncommonly civil to me, and I will treat him with respect for his own and the signora's sake."

A hint from lord Ellesmere increased
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the adulation of the signora, and made the soft praise of Frances more witching sweet, and sir Arthur was received by lady Ellesmere with all the distinction of a valued friend.

The appearance of sir Arthur was greatly improved; he scarcely looked the same being; his hair was fashionably cut, highly scented, and his dress seemed to be completely new. The baronet, in the full glow of life, seemed scarcely to have measured thirty years, and his honest countenance, now well washed, had nothing vulgar or disagreeable in the expression; on the contrary, sir Arthur was generally esteemed a handsome man, and, despite of his clownish gait, his figure might have defied the criticism of a statuary.

“ I hope, my lady,” said the baronet, addressing lady Ellesmere, “ you do not find the smell of my head heavy or disagreeable? I assure you, my lady, it was no fault of mine, though I paid pretty dearly for being perfumed (I suppose I should

should say) out of my money, and into a headache : but I will tell your ladyship all about it. Lucius O'Brien kept growling about my hair all the morning, and dragged me with him to North's, the emporium of fashion; to get it properly cut. Well, my lady, the dowsey doll of a fellow kept clip, clip, clip, till I was quite weary ; so I jumped up at last, and swore I would stay no longer, when I was soused over head and ears by a most villainous greasy composition, worse in my mind than fifty foxes.—‘ Oh, my wheel-anteek !’ cried the jim-trim hair-clipper ; ‘ a quart bottle full of my very best wheel-anteek quite destroyed !’ while I roared and cursed, for, faith, my lady, I was almost poisoned with the *scent*. ‘ I would thank you, sir, for four pounds, sir, which is only the first cost of my wheel-anteek.’ —‘ Faith, my fine fellow, Clip-and-go-Constant, you shall have four-and-forty ;’ and only Lucius O'Brien wheeled him out of the room, I would have given him a payment he

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would

would have remembered all the dear days of his life.—‘And now, Mr. Lucius O’Brien,’ said I, ‘as you have brought me into all this trouble, I would thank you to bring me out of it. I cannot go before the ladies something like a pole-cat, with the wheel-anteek and the emporium of fashion on my back.’ So, my lady, he brought me to the Temple of Taste, a ready-made clothes shop in Grafton-street, and the fellow persuaded me black was the genteelest colour; and so, my lady, between taste and fashion, I was wheeled out of a pretty good penny: but that was not all—Lucius outright worried me to buy shoes and silk stockings, that I might look for once like a Christian. I hope your ladyship sees nothing heathenish about me, though I may be a bit of an idolater now and then, when I meet with beauty so perfect as yours, my lady.”

A second note was now brought to the countess from lady Glenfield, most anxiously requesting to see her.

Lady

Lady Ellesmere, with ill-concealed vexation, left society where she was adulated and respected as a queen, and lord Ellesmere, determined this unusual asperity of temper should not subside, went with her.

“ I regret I could not attend your first mandate,” said lady Ellesmere, with haughty coldness : “ may I now ask what are your excellency’s commands ?”

“ My dear formal Louisa,” said lady Glenfield, with soft conciliation, “ I only wished to speak a few words with you in private.”

“ I never had any secrets from lord Ellesmere. I presume your excellency has none from lord Glenfield ?” and the countess kept her seat with increased frigidity of aspect.

Lady Glenfield looked the deep confusion she felt, when her brother, lord Orlington, with all the assumed consequence of a self-nominated dictator, addressed the countess of Ellesmere—“ As a near relation I have heard, with deep regret, the introduction of signora da Cortina into the

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the family of your ladyship. In England the signora was universally believed to be the mistress of sir Charles Selwyn. How the crafty Italian imposed on your ladyship, I shall not seek to inquire, but merely state that your hitherto unblemished reputation will be stigmatized by such an infamous association. To save any unpleasant consequences which may arise, my advice is, the signora may be sent forthwith from whence she came;" and lord Orlington looked as if from his fiat there was no appeal.

"How fortunate I am," said the countess, "to have so kind a relative, to guard my frame, and guide my erring way, as lord Orlington, when my husband and nephew are so deficient in understanding and propriety! May I ask your sapient lordship what is your opinion of her grace the widowed duchess of Dunbane? Have you investigated her character with equal success? Your lordship was in Scotland during the life of her husband, and if I mistake not, have been there since."

"There

“There is but one—can be but one opinion of the lovely duchess; she is all perfection, and yet this all-perfect being was reared, educated, and lived, till within a few months of her marriage, in the same house with this calumniated signora.”

“My lord Orlington, you have spoken her eulogium—further conversation is useless; yet, as a near relation, I advise your lordship, if you wish to escape the aversion, the contempt of her grace, cease these insulting aspersions on the bosom friend of her mother, who bore the opprobrium, the scorn of a misjudging world, to preserve unsullied the spotless purity of this soft rose of beauty. You are proud, my lord, to acknowledge Frances of Dunbane as a relative, while you scruple not to throw a shade of infamy on her fair fame, by associating with vice the signora da Cortina, who reared this brightest ornament of our family. I feel ill—worried to death,” continued the countess, “with all this tormenting prosing;” and really

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harassed

harassed beyond her very limited powers of endurance, lady Ellesmere sunk exhausted on the sofa, and burst into tears.

With some difficulty her ladyship was soothed into composure, and the family of lord Glenfield consented to spend the day following but two at Merion-square, who privately agreed to bear with the occasional society of the signora for the present, in order to forward the matrimonial views of lord Orlington with the beautiful Frances.

The triumph of lady Ellesmere over the Glenfield party filled the bosom of her lord with transport, while the feelings of the signora and her daughter were ecstatic. With delight the friendly O'Briens and sir Arthur were invited to meet the viceregal party, and the countess, who knew lady Glenfield was an enthusiastic admirer of music, wished to shew off the signora and her pupil to advantage, and to collect, if possible, a sufficient number of performers for a concert.

“ You

“ You and Frances are unrivalled in excellence, signora ; Rosabel sings finely, and Heatherly has a mellow powerful voice ; and if young O’Brien cannot sing, he has sufficient good-nature to make out them that can. We have a fine-toned piano and a lovely harp, and Orlington is good for nothing on earth but beating the tamborine and giving impertinence.”

“ But your ladyship forgets that the marquis detests what he calls gentlemen pipers, and never sings in public ; and if his lordship says no to lady Rosabel, who shall attempt to say yes ? My sweet Frances and I will exert our utmost ability to gratify the friends of your ladyship.”

“ I am delighted to see you, Mr. O’Brien !” said the countess ; “ I have been wishing to see you this half-hour. Lady Glenfield is quite an amateur in music, and I wish to surprise her excellency with a concert. The musical abilities of the duchess and signora da Cortina are almost unrivalled. I wish, if possible, to have a
c 5 full

full band. Could you, in so short a time, procure me a sufficient number of good performers?—second-rate won't do.”

A playful smile stole over the features of O'Brien, as he said he would adventure the Herculean task.—“We have abundance of music-stands and benches, which I shall feel happy in having arranged under the direction of your ladyship. Music is the passion of my uncle, the earl of Dunleer. We have frequent concerts got up under his direction, and this moveable orchestra, as he calls it, is quite a contrivance of his own. Though the best, he is the most eccentric of human beings, and we are frequently obliged to change from room to room to please his varying fancy.”

The self-allotted task of Lucius O'Brien was soon completed, and the countess, with admiring wonder, beheld the elegant arrangements for her concert—the cushioned seats, so richly fringed—the ornamented music-stands—the tasteful, light, yet costly drapery; the beautiful Frances
and

and the signora were in ecstasies of delight, and the marquis of Heatherly became every hour more unable to account for the obedience which met, with magic haste, their wishes.

When lord Orlington met the O'Brien family in Merion-square, his lordship surveyed them through his jewelled eyeglass with all the insolence of *ton*. Mr. O'Brien was too highly fashioned, too well acquainted with the world, to be embarrassed by his impertinence, but rather amused at the pains his lordship took to appear ridiculous and disagreeable; but his nieces, the two Misses Hammersley, never before subjected to such impertinent scrutiny, were ready to sink with confusion. They were young, beautiful, and modest, fashionable and uncommonly elegant in their appearance.

Sir Arthur O'Dwyer, who had taken his usual station beside the signora, surveyed him for some time in silence, then addressed his fair companion in a voice which sought no concealment—"What a pity,

ma'am, that cousin of yours is so purblind! but it is an old saying, 'red-haired people have always tender eyes.' Now, to my mind, a good pair of spectacles would be much more agreeable than twisting about a spyglass that way; it makes a man look cursed ugly, and to be sure, though it is no fault of his, your cousin has no beauty to spare. Only look how he has frightened the little girls yonder; they think he is making mouths at them, poor fools, while he is only striving all the time to get a good look at their pretty faces."

This observation of sir Arthur's caused a general smile, and lord Orlington, highly offended, stroamed over to the undismayed baronet.

"I shall take the trouble, sir, to tell you I am not purblind, and that *lady* is no relative of mine."

"Is not she indeed? then, to my mind, the loss is all on your own side.—If you were of my way of thinking, ma'am, you would never claim kindred or acquaintance with him either, ma'am. Any man
that

that stands making faces at young ladies, by way of amusing himself, when he ought to be contriving how to make himself most agreeable, is only fit company, in my mind, for scavengers and merry-andrews, ma'am, for we are born to protect, not to insult the ladies ;" and sir Arthur looked at the noble peer with equal contempt and defiance, then continued, in a very low tone—"If you have a fancy for any more talk on the subject, I will be at my cousin O'Brien's, next door, to-morrow at twelve o'clock. Till then we will be very agreeable before the ladies, if you please ; for to my mind it is no great proof of valour to be hectoring or impertinent before them."

"I have no ambition," said lord Orlington, contemptuously, "to have any further conversation with such a model of elegance and good-breeding."

"So I thought," replied the undaunted baronet ; "you like sleeping in a whole skin quite as well as being impertinent."

His lordship affected not to hear this remark,

remark, but stroamed to the window, which he threw open, and amused himself by pulling the leaves and breaking the branches of a beautiful geranium, which stood in the balcony.

Lady Glenfield, provoked at his conduct, called out—"Oblige me, lord Orlington, and close the window—I feel the air quite too cold."

But lord Orlington chose to continue his employment.

Sir Arthur arose, bowed very low to her excellency, and not only closed, but fastened the window.—"And now, my lady lieutenant, if I might, like a true and loyal subject, be allowed humbly to advise your excellency, I would keep that young gentleman locked up outside the house there, till he begged pardon on his knees for his disobedience and impertinence; seeing you are a queen, my lady lieutenant, while you are here, you should command, and we obey; and it is a very bad example, in my mind, please your excellency, for
your

your own countryman to set us, who are a hundred years behind you in civilisation."

"Oh! make him beg pardon, by all means," cried the delighted lady Ellesmere; but a summons to dinner released the prisoner.

Lord Ellesmere set him free, and lord Orlington, who, to phrase it like sir Arthur, preferred sleeping in a whole skin, affected to treat all that passed as playful *badinage*. He placed himself next the duchess at dinner; but her grace, amused by the animated conversation of Lucius O'Brien, seemed to forget the vicinity of his lordship, or remembered him only as the calumniator of her mother.

Soon after the gentlemen appeared in the drawing-room, the countess took the arm of lady Glenfield, lord Ellesmere that of his excellency the lord lieutenant, and proceeded to the newly-arranged music-room. On their entrance, "God save the King" sounded in full harmony.

The nationality of young O'Brien had prevailed

prevailed on several young gentlemen belonging to Christchurch choir to attend, who joined with scientific skill the harmonious voices of signora da Cortina and her daughter—voices of such magic sweetness as seemed almost unearthly.

This elegant compliment, so unexpected on the part of lady Ellesmere, was received by the viceregal pair with praise unbounded; several beautiful glees and grand choruses succeeded, with rich and varied harmony.

Sir Arthur, who seemed nearly entranced with this concord of sweet sounds, stood beside the signora, turned over the leaves of her music-book with judicious skill, “and beat the measure as she sang,” was observed by lord Orlington, who, mentally smarting under the severity of the sarcasms uttered by the undaunted baronet, not the less severe for being so well deserved, determined to retaliate.

“That famous champion of yours, my lady lieutenant,” said his lordship, aloud, mimicking

mimicking, or rather caricaturing sir Arthur, "could sing you an Irish song in high style, if your excellency chose to command it."

"A true and loyal subject must always obey; and if your excellency does choose to command me, my lady lieutenant," said sir Arthur, advancing, "you will find me neither a poltroon or a rebel. I never knew any body over fond of talking yet, that ever could act like a soldier or a gentleman."

Lady Glenfield, half-terrified at the bold defiance of sir Arthur's eye, declared, with gentle sweetness, if sir Arthur could oblige her in that way, she would esteem it a peculiar favour.

Sir Arthur took her offered hand, and sinking on one knee, pressed it to his lips with gratified emotion.—"Gentleness, my lady, is the surest way to tame a savage—kindness the surest road to an Irish heart."

The beautiful Irish air of "Sa vorneen dulish" was selected by the baronet; and
never

never was surprise more powerfully displayed than in the countenance of lady Glenfield, as she heard the rich mellow tones of sir Arthur's voice, tutored by science and powerful in harmony. In the concluding line, "But sorrow, alas! to her cold grave had brought her," fancy could almost believe him bending over the tomb of her he deplored, the soul of sensibility, the pathos of genuine feeling, rested with such touching sweetness on every harmonized word.

"Oh, that jewel of an Irishman!" exclaimed lady Glenfield, "I feel more than half inclined to envy the signora da Cortina her conquest."

CHAPTER III.

*The Exile restored.*

As lord Fitzauburne sat in the library of Lewellyn Castle, reading, for the twentieth time, the last letter he had received from his wedded Rosabel, so full of pious hope, of cheerful resignation, it breathed the pure spirit of the most perfect piety, of the most ardent love, nothing was left untold that could gratify the heart, or amuse the mind of her husband.

“Rosa, sweetest Rosa! life of my life, soul of my existence!” said lord Fitzauburne, as he pressed the letter fondly to his lips; when a fine dashing-looking young man hastily entered, and gently putting his arm round the neck of his lordship, with respectful affection, softly whispered—

pered—"What news from Miss Rosa, dearest major? and how is my sweet, my bonny Mabel?"

The next moment the young stranger was folded with fraternal love to the heart of major Packenham.—"Welcome, O'Dowd! you have been long, very long exiled from me!"

The bright florid colour of health forsook the cheek of O'Dowd, and he rested his marbled brow on the supporting arm of the major.—"The old wizard was right for once, when he said I would not know the face of major Packenham from that of a stranger."

"My dear Hugh, this gentleman is lord Fitzauburne, the son of lord Coldbrook, whom I told you it was my intention to visit before we went to Scotland."

"To Scotland!" repeated O'Dowd, as the deep glow of indignation restored the rich carnation to his cheek; "to Scotland we cannot go, till you, major, have completed your twenty-third year."

"Nor

“Nor wizard, nor warlock, nor all the fancied power of necromancy, shall prevent me! My determination is fixed as fate. Don’t look so like an owlet, O’Dowd, for to Scotland I *will* go!”

“Don’t speak so loud, major,” cried O’Dowd, hastily; “we are surrounded by old Beelzebub and his imps; every word we spoke, so secret and so softly, he was well acquainted with. Going to Scotland is quite impossible at present; the wizard swore you should not, and he made me swear it too, if I could prevent it. I was taken out of my bed, overpowered with that unnatural heavy sleep, as usual, when the necromancer chooses to give me a pandemoniac lodging, to please his own demoniac fancy. When I awoke, I perceived I had been removed to my old apartment in the wizard’s castle. His beautiful paintings I could not mistake; the pastimes of Pandemonium decorated the walls, and blazing torches, with horrid glare, gave to view every infernal countenance,

nance, varied in hideous ugliness. Beside me growled the wizard, himself the most hideous of the infernal group.—‘ So, Mr. Hugh O’Dowd,’ he began, ‘ Solomon the wise and you intend to go to Scotland in a few weeks; but he shall not have the pleasure of your company; and what is more, squire Hugh, major Pakenham shall not go wenching to Scotland himself.’—‘ It is no wenching,’ cried I, ‘ but faithful, honourable love, and I defy the devil and all his works, and so does major Pakenham;’ and I began to pray out loud.—‘ Hold your tongue, you tormenting puppy!’ roared the necromancer; ‘ leave off your canting this moment, and mind what I say. . If you promise not to go to Scotland, or the major, if you can prevent it, till I choose——’—‘ And pray, Mr. Conjuror, when will your high mightiness please to license what you cannot prevent, for go to Scotland we will, in spite of the devil and doctor Faustus.’—Oh, major Pakenham, had you heard his laugh, so wild, so hideous,

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ous, so exulting, it chilled the life-blood glowing at my heart.—‘ You *will?*’ broke from his wizard lips, with such sarcastic hellishness, the demoniac sound still vibrates in my ear; then resuming his usual monotony of accent—‘ Mark what I say, O’Dowd, for I have something of more consequence at present to employ me than attending to what such a canting idiot can say, when my determination is already taken. You must not only promise, but swear to give up every idea of going to Scotland, till major Packenham is twenty-three, and to exert your energies, Mr. O’Dowd, to prevent him also; if you comply with this my desire, I will send you back in six weeks. You should return to-morrow, only I don’t choose to humour the rebellious-spirited major.’ Half asleep, and wholly irritated, I set the conjuror and his threats at defiance; bedlam was a trifle to us both, and it ended by old Beelzebub shaking and pounding the life almost out of me, as usual. Suddenly he
grew

grew quite calm, and desired I might uncover my head, for I had rolled the bed-clothes tightly round, to prevent my eyes from being clawed out, or he would make me.—‘ Can you tell what book is this,’ said the wizard; sternly, ‘ I hold in my hand?’—‘ You plague of Egypt, you torment beyond expression and endurance, to be sure I can—it is the Bible ; but how it came into your company, is the eighth wonder of the world.’—‘ Then hear me solemnly swear!’ and he pressed it with great fervour to his lips, ‘ if you don’t comply with my wishes, I will bring you to a strange country, where you shall neither see or hear from major Packenham, or from any one you ever knew, for a year at least, perhaps for ever ; but if you are obedient in that time, I will restore him to his family, for he will one day be an earl, and you to your parents.’

“ What could I do, major? there was no use in standing out against him, though I firmly believe he has kidnapped us both.

When

When the wizard had accomplished his purpose, he grew quite agreeable.—‘ You are very anxious, Hugh, to see your friend the major; but you will not know his face from that of a stranger; remember *that*, squire Hugh.’ He then put this brilliant brooch in my hand, desiring, I should rather say commanding, me to wear it constantly in remembrance of my oath.—‘ Six weeks hence a carriage will convey you within a few yards of Lowellyn Castle; when you awaken to-morrow, you will be in Pakenham Hall. I have ordered the housekeeper, Mrs. Waters, to take good care of you, and not to be impertinently curious; and mark me well, O’Dowd—ask no questions; make neither comment or inquiry; though fruitless, they will offend me. Mrs. Waters is equally ignorant of my person as my intentions: be silent, and obey, or your exile from him, as major Pakenham calls it, shall be proportioned to your disobedience.’

“ My lord, the conjurer never came

near me any more, and his visits were most cheerfully dispensed with. A hired chaise, faithful to the wizard's promise, brought me here; and during my stay at Pakenham Hall I asked no questions; the penalty for disobedience was too severe."

The following morning major Pakenham found a letter on his pillow—"What new torment now?" and he felt more than half inclined to burn without perusing it, and with a heart determined to rebel, he tore open the unwelcome letter.

"Mr. Percy Pakenham, I suppose you are now satisfied; your friend and confident and counsellor is restored to your longing eyes. I am astonished at my own lenity, that left a tongue in his head to plot and cabal, and give impertinence to his betters. So, Mr. Pakenham, you intended to pack off to Scotland with Hugh Hopeful, your squire, and get married; but I chose to stop your career,

career, my elegant major: I have written to your father-elect; he is content to wait my leisure. I could not avoid declaring my astonishment, that a man so nobly allied should give his only child, a young beauty—a rich heiress, to a young fellow who had not a kindred tie that he knew of on earth. I will not gratify your curiosity by repeating his answer; but he shall lose nothing by his civility, and I hope you will never give him cause to alter his good opinion, to put the little girl in good humour, for I dare say she is sulky enough at not seeing her smooth-faced Joe. I have sent her a set of as fine emeralds as money could purchase—as beautiful pearls as ever braided hair as bright and glossy as her own; and tell that foolish fellow O'Dowd, I have not forgotten his bonny Mabel; you will hear both from Rosa and her father in a few days, and if they are contented, I see no cause you have to be dissatisfied. It is my desire—my command, you remain where

you are at present, and pay the most dutiful attention to lord Coldbrook; shew him this letter, and as I have not mentioned the name of your intended bride, he will perceive I wish to keep it secret. I interdict all conversation on the subject. Tell your cousin Henry, that Jezebel the first and Jezebel the second, the signora and the duchess, shall have no power to injure the golden hair that curls over the innocent head of his Rosabel. She is blooming and happy, surrounded by friends who have the will and the power to protect her."

In no very happy temper major Pakenham entered the breakfast-room with this letter in his hand. Lord Coldbrook smiled at the lordly manner of the writer, that would be obeyed, and soothed the half-rebellious mind of his young friend into obedience.

The fascinating manners of the signora
da

da Cortina, combined with her musical abilities, her soft humility, her ardent desire to please, imperceptibly won on the good opinion of lady Glenfield ; and the duchess, anxious to secure such powerful protection for her mother, treated lord Orlington with the most witching kindness, whose self-love, at all times sufficiently buoyant, taught his lordship to believe his conquest over the heart of the beautiful widow was secure.

“ Only think,” said lady Ellesmere, “ we have been nearly four months in Ireland ; I declare it seems scarcely a week, we were so gay and so happy. The dear O’Briens are the best of all good creatures, and sir Arthur O’Dwyer is quite a treasure. Lady Glenfield and I were talking over his evident attachment to you, signora, and the surprise we felt at his not asking openly for that fair hand, he seems to guard so sedulously from others. We suspect there is still some Irish pride or Irish prejudice lurking at his heart, which prevents him ;

and lady Glenfield, now completely assured of the cruel injustice with which you have been treated, signora, is most anxious to make every atonement in her power to her who bore with sainted meekness so much ill treatment; and while we proudly boast Frances of Dunbane is our relative, her preceptress shall not be obliged to hide her head in shame and sorrow: though always a favoured and welcome guest at the viceregal lodge at the Park, you have not yet, signora, been presented at the Castle. In March, on Saint Patrick's day, her excellency, lady Glenfield, has consented to receive you on my introduction; sir Arthur then can be no longer fastidious, and I shall soon hope to salute you, dearest signora, as lady O'Dwyer."

"The marriage of the signora is now quite determined on," said the smiling Frances; "but when are we to have that of the marquis and lady Rosabel? they seem sufficiently enamoured of each other. When is it to be, lord Ellesmere?"

His

His lordship looked uneasy—"You know, Frances, we must wait Heatherly's leisure; he *will* have every thing his own way."

"Heatherly," said the countess, when the marquis came into the room, "there is a question in debate, in which you have the casting voice; do make us acquainted with your determination?"

"Before I know the question, must I give an answer? is not this, my fair aunt, unreasonable?" and he playfully kissed her hand.

"Well then the question is—when are you to be married to Rosabel?"

"On the day she becomes of age, I claim her promised hand. We have just been conversing on the subject. My gentle Rosabel combines the wisdom of the serpent with the innocence of the dove; sensible beyond her years, my rebellious will was obliged to yield accordance to her better judgment.—'By waiting a few months, Heatherly, I shall take off every odium

from my father. My own free act cannot stamp him with breach of faith and broken honour; my own free act will preserve you from the resentment of lord Fitzauburne and his father, domestic feuds will be avoided, and peace, and happiness, and Heatherly be mine!" Nor did I part from the lovely and beloved pleader, till I gave my sacred honour to make her mine only on her own terms. And now, my dear aunt, your question is finally answered, without any debating on my part."

"Rosa is right, perfectly right," said lord Ellesmere, who felt a heavy weight removed from his heart. "This act of hers, so free, so uncontrolled, will leave nothing for malignity to cavil at or condemn."

The fair duchess sweetly smiled assent; while disappointment, with corrosive smart, rankled in her bosom at this lengthened delay, for she could cherish no hope of becoming the wife of Fitzauburne, while Rosabel remained unmarried.

The next day lady Rosabel felt ill and feverish,

feverish, and unable to leave her room.—

“ I dare say she will be quite well to-morrow,” said lady Ellesmere. “ I am quite sorry Rosa cannot come with us to-day, they have always such delightful parties at lord Conolly’s.”

The marquis sighed heavily.

“ Don’t look so doleful, Heatherly ; where are you going to ? ”

“ I am going first, lady Ellesmere, to send my excuses to lord Conolly, and then to prevail on the kind-hearted Mrs. O’Brien to visit my poor deserted Rosabel.”

“ How very extraordinary George Heatherly is ! I suppose he expected we should all remain at home, to weep and wail over Rosabel’s headache,” said the countess, with fretful vexation ; “ I declare his prosing fits are quite tormenting.”

Mrs. O’Brien accorded with maternal solicitude to the wishes of the marquis.

“ I am going,” said the colonel, “ to Stephen’s Green : with your permission, marquis, I will call on my cousin doc-

tor Clements ; I have the utmost reliance on his professional skill ; and the urbanity of his manners will, I am certain, meet the approbation of your gentle cousin."

" I feel infinitely obliged for your kindness, colonel ; any relative of yours must be good and estimable ; to his skilful care, with happy confidence, I resign my sweet Rosabel."

The marquis paced the drawing-room with a heavy heart, till the return of doctor Clements from the apartment of Rosabel ; anxiety and dread furrowed his youthful brow, as he asked the opinion of the benevolent physician.

" The young lady, I have every reason to hope, will be perfectly well in a few days ; but, my lord, if you wish to present lord Fitzauburne with a healthy heir, these racketting parties must, in a great measure, be laid aside. You look astonished, marquis ; but I was acquainted with the marriage of lady Rosabel, as we
must

must still call her, previous to the arrival of her ladyship in this country; we have a friendly goblin in our family, under whose banners we serve, as he directs the lady Rosabel."

The bewildered marquis, as he made his acknowledgments, endeavoured to place a very liberal fee in the hand of doctor Clements.

"No, no, my lord, this cannot be; we have all our regular parts assigned us. You may call us legion, for we are many, though not ill-minded demons. My task is to watch over the health of this most interesting young creature; and to convince your lordship, if possible, that any attempt to find out our secret will be unavailing; at the same time we should feel grateful if we could obtain your lordship's implicit confidence, without suspicion and without inquiry; your lordship, on reflection, will, I am certain, do us the justice to believe that we have no object in view, but to protect innocence and virtue

from art and infamy. To prove you will honour me with your friendship on my own terms, give me your company to-day, my lord marquis; colonel O'Brien and his son have promised to dine with me, as Mrs. O'Brien has signified her intention of not leaving her interesting young friend till she is composed for the night; and I have every reason to believe, if my directions are followed, which Mrs. O'Brien's care will leave past doubt, that after to-morrow, my services as a physician will be no longer necessary."

Tears of thankfulness and gratitude sprang to the eyes of the high-spirited Heatherly, as he took the offered hand of the kind-hearted doctor Clements.—"My faith, my confidence, is all your own; but I feel unequal, even in words, to pay the heavy debt of gratitude I owe you."

At five o'clock young O'Brien called on the marquis, and they went together to Stephen's Green, where the colonel had arrived before them.

"I asked

“ I asked sir Arthur O'Dwyer to meet you here to-day, cousin Cornelius,” said the doctor, with all the nationality of voice and accent for which the worthy baronet was so remarkable, “ but he must beav it with the beautiful signora to my lord Connolly's ; the time was when it would take a good cable rope to drag him there ; but now the bright eye of the lovely Italian is his guiding star, and love has made him a complete gosshawk in his thirtieth year.”

“ A jackass, you should say, doctor : can he really intend to marry this artful yet fascinating signora ?”

“ Heaven forbid !” said the greatly-agitated marquis ; “ colonel O'Brien, I owe too many obligations to your family, to allow this simple unsuspecting baronet to become the dupe of an artful wanton. The fair, the polished exterior of this worthless woman, conceals a heart as depraved as ever beat in the bosom of an infidel. Let the confusion I feel, in acknowledging this Italian as the associate
of

of my guileless aunt, on whose fair fame the breath of scandal never rested for a moment, selected too by her husband, plead my apology for not being more explicit. Refer sir Arthur to me—I can rely on his honour—he will not betray a secret, which I only reveal to save him from misery and dishonour.”

“No, my noble-minded young friend,” said the colonel, pressing his hand with glowing ardour, “your feelings shall not be tried too severely. To gratify doctor Clements, I have made this experiment of your worth. Infidel, what say you now? there is perfection under the sun.”

“Forgive me, marquis,” said the doctor; “if I thought family pride or family feeling might make you unwilling to confess that infamy was associated in the bosom of your family, few would be so candid; but why should your lordship be surprised at what every one believes that is not acquainted with the secrets of our secret committee? I saw that sir Arthur admired.

mired and was amused by the signora da Cortina ; but I hoped and believed that pride of birth would prevent the baronet from giving his name to this foreigner, whose best acknowledged rank is governess to Miss Selwyn, now the widowed duchess of Dunbane ; her father was my relation, yet the greatest compliment I can pay his memory, is to let it rest for ever in the grave. To save your kinsman from this dishonourable alliance, I would have borne the blush of shame for the living, and raked the ashes of the dead ; but I am now ready to confess myself both an ass and a gosshawk."

" Had I recollected our conversation of the morning, I might have known, doctor Clements, that you were well acquainted with every occurrence in our family ; but I was shocked and surprised into the explanation by the serious manner of colonel O'Brien. I should be miserable if I thought the guileless baronet could be duped by this artful wanton."

" To

“To set your heart at rest, marquis, sir Arthur is acting a part, and he acts it to perfection. The task assigned him was to keep the mind of the signora engaged, to remain constantly near her, that the Italian might not have leisure to harass or oppress, which she might do in a thousand ways, without your knowledge, the gentle uncomplaining Rosa. When our task is accomplished, marquis, you will be made acquainted with as fanciful a history as was ever given credence to, or fastened on the brain of lord Coldbrook, the great grandfather of your cousin lord Fitzau-burne.”

In a few days lady Rosabel was sufficiently recovered to leave her room; but doctor Clements mentioned to lady Ellesmere the youthful Rosa must give up for some time late hours and crowded rooms; and it would be totally impossible for the lady Rosabel to venture abroad for some weeks, except in a carriage, merely to take the air.

“Rosabel.

“ Rosabel will be so lonesome, doctor,” said the countess, fretfully, “ for you know we cannot stay moping at home to keep her company.”

“ That is certainly optional with your ladyship, but I have serious apprehensions of a decline ; and if lady Rosabel continues this dissipated mode of life, the most fatal consequences must follow.”

“ I don’t know what you mean, doctor, by dissipation ; we live like other people of fashion ; and this mode of life agrees very well with the duchess of Dunbane, without any plague or proving ; and her grace is scarcely two years older than Rosabel.”

“ The constitution of the young ladies is extremely dissimilar,” said doctor Clements, with pointed meaning ; “ but if your ladyship will force lady Rosabel into late hours and racketting parties, the fault is not mine ; but I wish to clear my professional character from any aspersion that may hereafter be thrown on it, and I shall
take

take the liberty to make known my opinion to the marquis of Heatherly ;” and the doctor made his parting bow, with no trifling degree of hauteur in his look and manner.

“ I declare,” said the countess, “ that doctor Clements is a most impertinent old fright ; only I don’t like to offend dear sir Arthur, and the good-natured O’Briens, he should never show his disagreeable face here again ; I am sure he is a methodist or a presbyterian, he keeps such prosing and eanting about dissipation and late hours. I suppose the next thing he will do is to make George Heatherly stay moping at home like an owl, when he should enliven us with his society abroad. We missed him so much at lord Conolly’s, there was nothing but lamentations for his absence. I wonder what keeps sir Arthur O’Dwyer,” continued the countess, with fretful impatience ; “ he promised to be here early, to go with us to the viceregal lodge. He promised too to sing an entire
tire

tire Irish song at lady Glenfield's concert to-night. I hope doctor Owlet has not got hold of the baronet, to put mischief in his head ; I am sure he was ready to beat us all before he went away ; I declare he looked quite spiteful ; I am half afraid of the cranky old savage."

Sir Arthur O'Dwyer came at last, and was most abundant in his apologies for delay ; his lamentations for the ill health of lady Rosabel were unbounded.—" My cousin doctor Clements was saying he was afraid of a galloping consumption, so I did not hurry, my lady, for I thought you would not be for going out, my lady ; but I am glad to see you look so beautiful and so happy, when I thought you would not have an eye in your head for crying ; but maybe the sweet child is not so bad, after all, as he was making believe."

" Really, sir Arthur, that cousin of yours is enough to provoke a saint, with his preaching and his prosing. Rosabel looks well and healthy, say what he will ;
and

and only for your sake, sir Arthur, I would never desire to see the tormenting old fright again."

"Tormenting old fright, my lady!" repeated sir Arthur; "well now that is very extraordinary, to my mind, my lady, that a high-bred lady, like you, should condescend to call nicknames; for I will take the liberty to prove, my lady, that he does not deserve any one of them in real earnest; in the first place, as to tormenting, it is the general character of doctor Clements to cure in perfection all kinds of torments incident to the human body, such as fever and ague, gout and rheumatism; and for curing the colic, my lady, he is a nonpareil; and for being old, my lady, under favour, that is all a mistake, for he is four years younger than my cousin Cornelius, who is not fifty yet; though being a little weather-beaten, or so, makes him look older; and as to his being a fright, my lady, oh, he is all perfection!"

"Dear sir Arthur," said the impatient
and

and provoked lady Ellesmere, "he is the nonpareil of colic and fever; but we cannot stay now to discuss the merits of doctor Clements—we shall be quite too late at the Park."

"And sir Arthur is too good a subject," said the signora, with witching softness, "to keep her excellency waiting dinner for us."

Sir Arthur kissed the fair hand of the signora with old-fashioned gallantry, and bowed very low to lady Ellesmere.—"I am ready to attend you, my lady, now I have convinced you, my lady, that my cousin, doctor Clements, is all perfection, instead of a prosing old fright, my lady."

The appearance of the marquis, ready to join their party, completely harmonized the temper of lady Ellesmere. He had left his sweet Rosabel under the maternal care of Mrs. O'Brien, who had sent her excuse to the Park, to watch over the health of her interesting young friend.

"To my mind," said sir Arthur, "Mrs.
O'Brien

O'Brien is worthy of having children, for she feels and acts like a mother : not meaning any offence to you, my lady, who are so much better informed on every subject than we ignorant Irish, who too often follow the impulse of the heart, without ever consulting the head."

" I knew very well," thought the countess, " that odious doctor Clements would put mischief into his head ; I declare he has made sir Arthur almost as cranky as himself."

The signora exerted all her powers of fascination ; and the baronet was soon restored to his native gaiety and good humour.

CHAPTER IV.

*The viceregal Concert.*

“ My lady lieutenant,” said sir Arthur, with his usual number of bows, “ I took the liberty to desire a young cousin of mine to come this evening, and sing at your excellency’s concert ; he only came from England yesterday, and I hope he will be quite agreeable to your excellency, my lady lieutenant, as he has the very fine kind of tenor voice your excellency was wishing for a day or two ago.”

“ I feel infinitely obliged by your kindness, sir Arthur ; but your bringing him here to dinner would have enhanced the obligation ; any relative of yours must always be a welcome guest here.”

Before sir Arthur could express the gratitude

titude he really felt for this condescending kindness of lady Glenfield, lord Orlington, with a stare of contempt, asked the baronet if his young cousin was a public singer or a music-master ?

“ Neither, my lord,” replied sir Arthur, with calm indifference; “ he was born, like many a worthless puppy, to a good estate, and he has not yet learned to sing empty pockets by shaking his elbows. His father, my lady lieutenant, was a gentleman and a soldier, and died on the field of battle, fighting for his king and his country, as in duty bound, and I would advise you as a friend, my lord Orlington, as you value whole bones, not to be overfond of calling nicknames to his father’s son ; it is a family failing neither to give or to take an offence.”

In the evening sir Arthur entered the music-room, a young man leaning on his arm, in whose joyous countenance thronged all the loves and graces ; his figure might have served as a model for the young Adonis,

Adonis, and his happy smile beamed love and joy.

Sir Arthur, with no trifling degree of exultation in his look and manner, presented him to lady Glenfield as his cousin, Frank Hammersley, and then paraded him round to lady Ellesmere and her party, who received him, to gratify sir Arthur, with the most marked and flattering attention ; and young Hammersley, with a countenance beaming admiration, took his station beside the juvenile widow.

“ Now that is just as it ought to be, my lady duchess,” said sir Arthur, rubbing his hands in high glee, “ you have got a beau just fit for your youth and your beauty. I often thought it a pity your grace should be always stuck up beside an old married man, that will, one of these days, be a grandfather. My lord Ellesmere, I am sure, will be very much obliged to my young cousin Frank, to take the trouble off his hands, seeing it is more natural for his lordship to prefer sitting beside his own

beautiful wife, who looks more than ten years younger than himself; not but it was very good-natured of my lord Ellesmere, seeing, as he did, to be sure, the aversion you had to your red-headed cousin, who, to my mind, is no way agreeable to take off from his ugliness."

"What on earth is the baronet about," thought the marquis, "thus voluntarily to brave, or rather incur, the anger of two noblemen, whose designs he must be well acquainted with!"

But sir Arthur, as if totally unconscious of the jealous pangs he inflicted, continued his conversation with the signora about the beautiful pair he had so happily placed together. But though the countenance of both was sufficiently indignant, neither of the noble lords thought proper to notice the audible remarks of the undaunted yet simple-seeming baronet.

Lord Orlington, who had less command of temper than lord Ellesmere, and less fancied security in the affections of the
young

young widow, continued stroaming about for some time, like a malignant demon; seeking whom he might worry and annoy with impunity. At length he stopped exactly opposite the Misses Hammersley, who were in a distant part of the room from their brother and sir Arthur—so distant, that his lordship thought his insolence could not be observed.—“Greville,” said his lordship, addressing a young Englishman, one of the aide-de-camps, whose present rank and future preferment depended solely on the patronage of lord Glenfield, “did you ever see such a pair of frights? they are sisters to the music-master that half-crazy baronet brought here to sing at lady Glenfield’s concert.”

“Are they singers or actresses, my lord?” said captain Greville, most successfully imitating the insolent manners of his superior; “they must be useful, as they are so cursedly far a-field of being ornamental.”

This witty speech was received by lord

Orlinton with a loud laugh, echoed by his double, while the eye-glass of each unmanly insulter was levelled without mercy at their innocent faces with unremitting persecution.

This unprovoked and unmanly insolence did not escape the observation of the lynx-eyed baronet; and before they suspected his vicinity, he was seated between the sisters.

“ I am very much obliged to you both, gentlemen,” said sir Arthur, bowing distantly to each, “ for the trouble you took to amuse my young cousins, for I heard you laughing quite merry; to be sure it was no less than you ought to do as gentlemen and well-bred Englishmen, seeing the poor little girls were all alone in a crowd, as a body may say; I suppose they lost their party coming up stairs, poor fools! and were too timid to walk across the room to look for their friends. But I hope you wont take it amiss, gentlemen, if I bring them away now; their brother, Frank Hammersley,

Hammersley, has a mortal aversion to their making new acquaintances, particularly with foreigners, because he says they are often spendthrifts and toadeaters, and his sisters are nobly connected, and have large fortunes, and my young cousin Frank wishes to keep them out of harm's way ; now to my mind, that is being over nice, for in every country, and in every rank, you will find the worthless and the good-for-nothing—for instance, a peer of the realm may be a poltroon and a fool, a profligate and a gambler, all in one—and a captain of horse be a toadeater and a hanger-on, with nothing but his pay, and the smiles of the great, to support him, and nothing to recommend him but his venality and assurance.”

Sir Arthur again distinctly bowed to lord Orlington and his friend, and with gentle kindness placing an arm of each lovely girl through his own, joined the Ellesmere party.

The voice of Hammersley did ample

credit to the judgment of sir Arthur, and lord Glenfield mentioned his intimacy with the late general Hammersley on the Continent.—“ He was,” continued his excellency, “ as brave a soldier as ever drew a sword—as fine a gentleman as ever wore a British uniform. That honour which guided his every action through life, firmly planted the laurel in his grave, embalmed by the tear of many a war-worn soldier; and the gay and gallant general still lives in the memory and in the hearts of his brother soldiers.”

Brightly glowed the colour on sir Arthur's cheek at this well-deserved eulogium on his kinsman, as he feelingly exclaimed —“ And you, my lord lieutenant, reign in every Irish heart, seeing you love and cherish us in return, my lord lieutenant, and that's more than we can boast of every stranger that comes among us.”

“ I don't consider myself a stranger in Ireland,” said lord Glenfield, with gratified emotion; “ some years back I was resident
here

here for many months; and the brave and social sons of Erin, her chaste and blooming daughters, are held with fond remembrance in my heart; the Emerald Isle can never be forgotten, till hospitality and valour are no more."

Sir Arthur was now called upon to give his promised Irish song, and "Elleen A-roon" was harmonized by the mellow and powerful voice of sir Arthur O'Dwyer. The concert of lady Glenfield was unmarred by a discordant note, and the evening closed with happy gaiety, and the most perfect harmony, if we except the jealous fears of lords Ellesmere and Orlington.

The next time doctor Clements called to visit lady Rosabel, the marquis mentioned his surprise at the conduct of sir Arthur, in exposing himself to the malignant temper, the insulting impertinence of lord Orlington, the more deep and serious displeasure of lord Ellesmere, by the manner he introduced young Hammersley to the duchess of Dunbane.

“ If your lordship was aware of the secrets of our secret committee,” said the doctor, “ you would perceive the necessity of disturbing the happy calm enjoyed so long by the noble lords and lady you have now mentioned. The leisure hours of the young duchess, and her *ci-devant* governess and present confidante, were employed in scrutinizing your lordship’s conduct, the motive of every action ; the result of this investigation was not very far from the truth, that your lordship was the friendly agent to secure the hand of lady Rosabel, when of age, to your cousin lord Fitzau-burne, and they determined to prevail on the plastic lord Ellesmere to enforce your marriage, or dismiss your lordship altogether, as the lover or friend of lady Rosabel.”

“ Force me ! dismiss me !” repeated the marquis, as he paced the room with hasty strides, his eyes sparkling with rage ; “ it is easier to denounce the lion than to cage him !”

“ Cool,

“Cool, cool, my young friend,” said doctor Clements, vainly endeavouring to conceal the smile which played over his features; “the lion is not yet denounced; Frank Hammersley was brought from Ballinderry Tower, in the county Wicklow, to prevent it. Hammersley never left Ireland, but was literally turned out of his own house, to accommodate lord Ellesmere, that lady Rosabel might be in the centre of her friends; his sisters, who lived with him, cheerfully consented to reside with their uncle, colonel O’Brien, and his very amiable wife; and Hammersley remained with his guardian, lord Dunleer, who was also the near relation of his father, or at Ballinderry Tower, the seat of his cousin the marquis, till his services were wanting. The morning before the viceregal concert, we had intelligence of their intentions, and acted accordingly. Frank Hammersley was called into action, to rouse the jealous rage of lord Ellesmere, and to give the fair ladies, if possible,

some other employment than working mischief; and, to use sir Arthur's own words, there is not a handier fellow in Christendom for blowing the coals than himself, when he sets it before him. We are secure for some time at least, and then I shall find it necessary to order lady Rosabel, for change of air, either to Lucan or the Black Rock, that is, either to lord Dunleer's or colonel O'Brien's. You will be greatly astonished, marquis, when informed from what source we derive our information; the most secret thoughts of these fair ladies are open to our view, the inmost recesses of their hearts laid bare to our inspection, and what a mass of depravity and corruption is glossed over by each angel form and syren tongue! Calm this perturbed spirit, my dear marquis, and rest assured, the peace of lady Rosabel shall remain uninjured; but remember, every look and every word you utter is marked by the vilest of the vile, signora da Cortina; you cannot be too cautious, marquis;

marquis ; cool be your motto, keen your eye, till we meet again."

The marquis remained in deep thought for more than an hour after doctor Clements left the house ; but all conjecture was unavailing, he could trace to no source whatever the powerful protection experienced by Rosabel ; rank and fashion, youth and age, were alike tributary to her happiness and comfort, the system regularly kept up and widely diffused, till the marquis became at length bewildered in his own ideas, and weary of conjecture ; he looked at his watch—" Rosabel will be alarmed at not seeing me—I should have been with her more than an hour ago."

CHAPTER V.

*The Recess.*

“ DID you think I had forgotten you, Rosa ?” said the marquis, as he entered the sitting-room of her ladyship ; “ but the fact is, my sweet coz, I got into such deep thought, reflecting on the benevolent kindness we have experienced in this country, that the lapse of time was forgotten ; but we have still sufficient time to finish the beautiful poem we began yesterday before dinner ;” and the marquis walked over to the ornamented recess, for the interesting poem he had commenced reading the day before to his cousin.

His lordship felt the recess move beneath his hand, and the next moment it pressed him closely against the wall ; the marquis
was

was soon released from his imprisonment, the recess gently and without noise regained its former station; but the admiration of the marquis was soon superior to his surprise, when he beheld a form bending with graceful softness, with fond affection, over lady Rosabel, which a poetic fancy might have justly delineated as the goddess of spring, the form so light, so ethereal—so blooming, so benevolent the face.

When this seraph-looking girl perceived the marquis, she glided swiftly through the apartment, and instantly disappeared; and the astonished young man remained for many minutes the statue of admiring wonder.

His first movement was to examine the recess; but his lordship's scrutiny, though most minute, was unavailing. Built in the wall, expressly for its present purpose, its strength defied every exertion of the marquis to move it; in vain he pressed on every ornamental decoration, no spring answered

swered to his touch, and opened wide the secret portal, but a voice, scarcely audible, met his ear.

"Marquis of Heatherly, is it thus you fulfil your promise to doctor Clements of implicit faith and confidence? seek no further—this scrutiny is unavailing, this schoolboy curiosity unworthy your noble nature."

The marquis, almost believing himself under the influence of magic, took the "Bridal of Triernmain" from the recess, and approached his cousin.—"My dear Rosabel, I feel at this moment, like sir Rowland de Vaux, ready to adventure every peril, to perform any vigil the most severe, to view again this enchanting—I will not say enchanted maid, to breast the moat, to brave the terror-enchanted hall, could I obtain the maid and laurel crown. Seriously, Rosabel, I never beheld a face, a form so unearthly; and as I gazed on so much heavenly beauty, I felt as if impelled to kneel and worship a descended angel.

Could

Could I inquire, dearest Rosabel, without risking the displeasure of your friends—could I seek to know the name of this soul-subduing beauty?”

“I am equally unacquainted with her name and rank. Mrs. O’Brien brought her here the morning I took ill, and gently told me I must ask no questions, if I valued the society of this little girl. The bribe was too alluring not to silence me at once, and I have enjoyed many happy hours in her sweet society. Heatherly, you think her form unearthly, but I am well convinced her soul is all celestial; a saint might read the tablet of her mind, and claim a kindred spirit in a soul so pure.”

“Sweet eulogist,” said the marquis, as he fondly pressed her hand, “and wise and amiable as sweet, forget not your cousin Heatherly when this bright excellence again appears to sooth your solitude.”

“Oh, my cousin,” said the gentle Rose, as the tear of sensibility glistened in her eye,

eye, "could I but see this peerless girl your bride, my constant, my most fervent prayers for your happiness would be realized, and angels might rejoice to witness the union of so much kindred excellence."

Young Hammersley, faithful to his trust, so completely engaged the mind of the beautiful Frances, that he left her no leisure time to work mischief; while the admiration of the baronet became every day more serious, and left no shadow of doubt in the bosom of the signora, that her honourable rank in life would be speedily established by her union with sir Arthur O'Dwyer.

"I wish, sir Arthur," said young Hammersley, "we could contrive to get up a play or a puppet-show, an opera or a masquerade, any thing for the sake of dear variety. I am weary of the concord of sweet sounds; I feel an irresistible impulse, in the middle of every grand march, to march off, till spell-bound by the glance
of

of a clear blue eye, I remain to gaze and to admire, though impatient at hearing this everlasting ding-dong-jingle."

"Are you so changeable, so very fond of variety, Mr. Hammersley?" said the signora.

"Unchangeable only in love, signora," and he fixed his soul-speaking eyes on the blooming widow.

The baronet remained for some time in deep thought.—"I was thinking, cousin Frank," said he, at length, "as you are so fond of variety, of a way we might give a most agreeable surprise to my lord and lady lieutenant, lord and lady Ellesmere, and the agreeable old lady dowager, all at the same time; that is, if it meets the approbation of these lovely ladies, and they will consent to give us their assistance accordingly."

"Can sir Arthur ask, and we refuse?" said the soft-toned Frances; "or can he believe us so deficient in gratitude, that our hearts would not instantly accord the
most

most ready compliance to any wish of his, founded, as it must be, in propriety and honour," said the signora, with resistless sweetness.

The baronet pressed both his hands on his heart, bowed low and repeatedly, but seemed totally unable to express the varying feelings of his heart, which thronged to his lips for utterance, of pleasure, gratitude, and love; his eloquent silence was thus translated by the signora da Cortina.

"While you stand bowing and flourishing in dumb-show, sir Arthur," said the impatient Hammersley, "we can never get at your secret of being surprisingly agreeable; so out with it at once, man; the ladies will give you credit for gratitude unutterable beyond your feeble powers of expression. Now I have made this fine speech for you, sir Arthur, declare this novel mode of being happy. The secret, the secret, sir Arthur! I am all impatience. Why don't you speak? I believe, on my soul, you are struck dumb in good earnest; I shall

I shall expire with curiosity while you stand bowing there like a Mandarin."

"Which is much better, in my mind, cousin Frank, than to stand prating, like a magpye, about curiosity, seeing it is no great qualification for a gentleman to boast of."

"And if gratitude did tie my tongue, folly has set it loose again, cousin Frank." Then addressing the signora—"This impatient young gentleman is right, sure enough, ma'am, when he said I wanted words to express my gratitude, ma'am: but my future conduct shall be the best proof of my real sentiments of the perfectibility of your goodness, ma'am. Now, what I was thinking, ma'am, is this; we have a nice little playhouse of our own, and a very beautiful one too, ma'am, and I was thinking to make believe to the lady lieutenant and my lord Ellesmere, that it was a concert, just in the old way, ma'am, and then all of a sudden to give them an agreeable surprise, by acting a play, ma'am.

The

The marquis of Ballinderry is always quite agreeable to lend us his band whenever we have a play, ma'am, seeing I am the next heir to his title and estate, for he never had a son; but his daughter is as sweet and as beautiful as a rosebud in June, and I think it is a very hard case that the law obliges me to take away the title and estate from his only child, ma'am."

But the signora thought otherwise: with difficulty she prevented the throbbing of her heart from being perceptible at this ecstatic intelligence. The coronet of Ballinderry floated before her fancy; it encircled her brow: she took precedence of lady Ellesmere, and finally determined a friendly fit of apoplexy should soon confirm her a marchioness; and the displeasure of lord Ellesmere was quite forgotten, should his lordship disapprove of this new species of amusement, as the signora trod, with fancied security, the visionary vale; but calm and unruffled was her brow as these wild fancies thrilled in her heart, and filled each glowing

glowing thought with rapturous exultation. She meekly bowed and gently smiled, and offered her best services to amuse and gratify the amiable vice-queen, and all her kind and indulgent friends.

“And now you have so sweetly consented, I hope this young beauty wont be hard-hearted, ma’am, seeing you, who reared her, would be the last in the world to set her bad example, ma’am; and we will keep it snug and secret, if you please, ma’am, from that Argus-eyed old lord, her guardian, who looks, for all the world, as if every body was ogres or giants ready to eat her up, and from my lord, her red-headed cousin too, ma’am, who, to my way of thinking, has the most disagreeable way of making love in the wide world, ma’am.”

“Lord Orlington,” said the smiling Frances, whose spirits were buoyant with delight at the perspective greatness of her mother, “considers his hair bright auburn;
you

agreeable, my lord ; but as to parting the other two, it would be morally impossible, and quite out of nature ; they look so beautiful and so happy, for all the world like two rosebuds growing on one stalk, and yours, my lord, I am quite certain and sure, would not be the savage hand to tear them rudely asunder, seeing you have neither rhyme or reason to do so ; for Frank Hammersley has as good blood in his veins as any lord in the land, and a fine noble estate ; and as to beauty, though I am not over fond of saying it to his face, he need not turn his back to any boy in Christendom."

With difficulty the courtly earl composed his temper to reject with civility sir Arthur's friendly offer : his lordship had been commissioned by lady Ellesmere to request the ladies would give their opinion on some ornamental point in dress ; the countess was now waiting for them in her dressing-room, and the expression of his lordship's eye, as he addressed them, filled the

the heart of the fair Frances with disquietude, and that of her companion with contempt, defiance, and revenge; while the smile of soft compliance rested on her ruby lip, the baronet and young Hammersley having no longer any inducement to remain, made their parting bows, as the ladies left the room, in ready compliance to the wishes of lady Ellesmere.

The scorpion stings of jealousy fastened on the heart of lord Ellesmere, and filled every throbbing pulse with agony; he cursed, in the bitterness of his heart, the wild Irishman, whose uncouth speeches had raised such a frenzied tumult in his breast, and as he entered the dressing-room of lady Ellesmere, felt more than half inclined to annihilate all mankind.

“Oh, my lord!” said the countess, gaily, “what a loss I had, not to see sir Arthur dancing to his own music! I declare I would just as soon have expected to see an elephant dance as the good baronet.”

The tears trembled in the clear blue
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eyes of Frances—" I fear his lordship was more angry than pleased at this exhibition; but situated as the signora is with sir Arthur, I was unwilling to refuse dancing with that teasing overgrown boy his cousin, whom he thinks all perfection."

" Lord, child, what folly in you to do otherwise! if he chose to yell the war-whoop, it was your part to be agreeable, and act Wowski or Yarico, or any thing else he chose. You owe unnumbered obligations to the signora, and to sing or dance with the baronet or his cousin, is a very pleasant way to prove your gratitude;" and the countess, who had not a particle of envy or ill-nature in her harmless composition, related to her lord the splendid prospects of sir Arthur.

The beseeching eye of Frances rested on the earl; her soft sorrow subdued his jealous fear, and believing himself loved; and loved only, his lordship accorded the olive branch, and harmony was restored.

The blandishments of the signora and her
daughter

daughter removed every withering doubt, every jealous pang, from the bosom of the infatuated earl; he believed himself fondly beloved by the beautiful Frances, without rival, or even fear.

“But, my lord,” said the youthful duchess, “I will not submit to have my fair fame blasted by this jealous watchfulness—this deepening gloom on your brow, which proclaims the secret of your heart; sooner, my lord, would I part from you for ever, than endure the good man’s pity, the scorn, the derision of fools. My actions shall be free and uncontrolled—unmarked, my lord, even by a look, or I will leave this Emerald Isle—this little Eden of delight, and go instantly to Scotland, where I have many friends. Your lordship cannot—dare not follow me there.”

The wonder-struck lord Ellesmere beheld the stern determination on her brow, and knelt, with wild alarm, at the feet of imperious beauty—“Oh, Frances! soul of my existence! my life hangs on your
F 2 smile!

smile ! Forsake me not, or I expire !” and again lord Ellesmere became a plastic automaton in their hands.

But the signora, who now hoped to see her daughter the wife of Hammersley, forbore to urge the speedy marriage of lady Rosabel—“ We have despoiled lord Coldbrook of his fondest wish—despoiled Fitzauburne of his fondest hopes in love, and will he marry my Antoniette to recompense this deep-inflicted heartache? or if he does, to gratify the whimsies of his father, can she be happy with him as with the joyous, the adoring Hammersley, whose smile is happiness—whose look heart-cheering mirth? My fate is changed—how sweetly!—oh, may her heart change too! then should we reign like queens in this Emerald Isle, and England and its calumnies be alike forgotten.”

But these sentiments the signora confined solely to her own bosom, believing the love—the assiduity—the thousand charms which combined in the person and
mind

mind of Hammersley, would chase far away each fond remembrance of the disdainful cold-blooded lord Fitzauburne; and the signora resolved no opportunity should be wanting to effect this much-wished-for change, and air-built castles and fairy bowers bloomed around the fancy-enchanted mind of signora da Cortina.

On reflection, the signora thought it would be more advisable to inform lord Ellesmere of this intended play, under the bond of secrecy—"Already has the lynx-eyed baronet discovered the secret of lord Ellesmere, whose shallow brain is no pillar of defence to rest upon. This surprise might make him betray it more openly, and destroy at once the high-raised hopes and brilliant prospects of your mother, my Antoniette."

The communication was accordingly made, and lord Ellesmere felt he must obey; yet, though his tongue accorded compliance to their wishes, his heart rebelled, and hope and fear alternately sway-

ed the bosom of the agitated earl, and made him acknowledge the truism, that virtue alone is happiness.

With some difficulty young Hammersley consented to postpone preparations for the play till after Saint Patrick's day.

"The duchess and I have a thousand flounces to arrange previous to making our appearance at the Castle."

"I presume it would not derange your flounces, signora, to look over our nice little theatre to-morrow, and settle on what play we shall do honour to in the representation;" and half petulant and half-coaxing, the persevering Hammersley continued his entreaties.

"To-morrow there is to be a review in the Phoenix Park, and lord Ellesmere will expect our attendance."

"What signifies what he expects, signora? if I had such a guardian, I would plague his life out, or make him leave off plaguing me. See how he looks now, watching us like Cerberus, so grim and so growling. I often think, duchess, his lordship

ship intends you for his second wife, he keeps such cat-like watching of your grace. Poor little timid mouse!" continued he, softly taking her hand as his love-inspiring eyes rested on her face, "I hope he will yet be enabled to take you out of the claws of old Grimalkin, and retain you among us for life, the brightest—the loveliest ornament of green Erin. Signora," and he looked beseechingly in her face, "cannot you contrive to get the toothache or headache, and stay in bed till old Grumbleton goes out, and his very sweet wife, who, I hope, may live these fifty years for his sake? The fair duchess will not leave her sick friend, and when they are fairly off, sir Arthur and I, like true and faithful knights, will kneel at the shrine of love and beauty with loyal duty: but see, lord Grandy approaches—am I in any danger, my fair enslaver, of being told my daily visits will be dispensed with? To avoid danger is the most certain way to escape it. Farewell then till to-morrow,

my lovely friends ! and, sweet, if you love me, remember the toothache."

"What was that prating boy talking so long about?" said lord Ellesmere, who affected a gaiety he did not feel; "what play have you fixed on? for I presume that was the subject of your conversation."

"We were endeavouring to put it off altogether," said the duchess, with meek innocence of manner, "and have succeeded till after Saint Patrick's day. No play has been fixed on, my lord, and we hope, as it does not completely meet your lordship's approbation, the idea may fade away entirely. Can Frances be gratified and you unhappy? Oh no, my lord; every thing but public odium I could endure to make my bosom's lord contented."

CHAPTER VI.

*The Theatre.*

THE next morning the signora complained of a violent headache, and was unable to leave her room, and the young duchess, with well-acted affliction, determined to remain in the sick chamber of her friend.

When the carriage of lord Ellesmere drove from the door, the fair ladies, blooming with health and hope, descended to the drawing-room, and young Hammersley, with noiseless step, entered soon after, softly singing, "Come, my fair ones, come away."

With respectful freedom he drew an arm of each smiling beauty through his own, and ascended the stairs with cautious celerity. He knocked gently at a door on

the upper story, which was opened by sir Arthur, smiling his delighted welcome.

“ And now, ma’am,” said the exulting baronet, “ what do you think of our nice little playhouse ?”

Both ladies declared themselves in fairy land, and their admiring wonder gratified, while it amused their companions.

This theatre was the joint property of colonel O’Brien and Mr. Hammersley ; it was taken off the upper back rooms of both houses, and was believed by lord Ellesmere’s family to be a locked-up store-room ; it had neither pit or gallery, but a splendid range of boxes, sufficiently large to accommodate with ease nearly a hundred spectators, rich in decoration, light, tasteful, and elegant.

Hammersley sprung on the stage, and, with graceful ease, displayed his varied powers of excellence in Hamlet, Romeo, Acres, and Bob Handy ; then, suddenly changing to young Meadows, he warbled forth, “ Oh, had I been by fate decreed !”
while

while his eyes were fixed with soul-subduing tenderness on the youthful widow; he then bounded towards her with the graceful agility of Harlequin, and kneeling theatrically at her feet, besought his liege lady to issue her sovereign commands, and say what the play should be.

The gratified young beauty appealed to the signora, who, unwilling her musical abilities should be concealed from the assembled friends of sir Arthur, gently replied that an opera would be most gratifying to lady Glenfield, who was never weary of the concord of sweet sounds.

“And if the wish of dear variety should perchance assail her heart, and our amiable vice-queen hereafter be inclined to the melting mood,” said the glowing Hammersley, “I will be the lovesick Romeo, the royal Dane, or Peruvian Rolla, at her excellency’s command.”

Love in a Village was at length determined on, and young Meadows sung, spouted, and frolicked around his Rosetta

with a thousand wild gaieties; but the countenance of sir Arthur became sad and heavy.

“Declare, sir knight,” said the sportive Hammersley, “what sombre thought has clouded that honest brow of thine;” and the signora, with a look of deep interest and suasive softness of manner, inquired if he was ill?

“I was thinking, ma’am,” and the baronet sighed heavily, “that Lucius O’Brien always plays Eustace, and he will not be for giving it up now, seeing the wide world could not produce such another Lucinda.”

“And the wide world could not produce such another Hodge as yourself, sir knight,” cried Hammersley, with his usual impatience; “and so, for the good of the play, my own dear cousin, sir Arthur, be agreeable to scold it out with my sister Rosina, who is a very lovely Madge—every one has their own notion of beauty, cousin Frank.”

“Your

“Your sister Rosey was never much to my taste, except in the way of kindred relationship and goodwill.”

“And who wants your goodwill in any other way, sir Arthur?” said Hammersley, half saucily, half offended. “Rosina Hammersley need not die in despair, though she cannot boast sir Arthur O’Dwyer is her lover.”

“I did not mean to vex you, cousin Frank,” said the good baronet, who seemed anxious to restore the smiles of his petulant favourite; “all I meant by talking about your sister Rosey, was, whom I love dearly well for a cousin, as in duty bound——” The baronet stopped, and stammered—“The upshot is, cousin Frank, without arguing any more about it, I would rather play Eustace, and let Lucius play Hodge.”

“And so spoil the whole opera at once. Signora, sweet and lovely fair,” and Hammersley knelt, in mock heroics, “command

mand your faithful knight—he will not rebel against his sovereign lady.”

It required all the art of the signora da Cortina to conceal the triumph of her heart, while her manner was sufficiently expressive to convince sir Arthur of her fondest affection.

He yielded to her soft entreaties, and hung enamoured over her witching form, her syren tongue.

“ And now, sir knight, late of the gloomy and discontented brow, from which the bright sun of beauty has chased away, most fortunately for the prosperity and happiness of our theatrical career, the murky vapours, which, like the clouds of a misty morning, obscured the native benignity of your countenance, declare, after consultation meet with your sovereign lady, when are we to exhibit our first rehearsal ?”

“ We have quite sufficient employment till Saint Patrick's day,” said the signora ;

nora; "when that festive day is celebrated, our greatest pleasure then will be to please you."

A loud knocking at the hall-door announced the return of lord Ellesmere, and the ladies were astonished to find more than two hours had sweetly glided away in happy thoughtlessness of time; and, with many kind and courteous speeches on all sides, they separated, and the signora was seated in her dressing-room, as nearly convalescent, when her unsuspecting friends, the ladies Heatherly and Ellesmere, entered, to make their affectionate inquiries.

With anxiety almost paternal, doctor Clements observed the great alteration which had taken place in the marquis of Heatherly; his bright colour had faded, his animated smile was seen no more, and, with genuine surprise, the good doctor heard himself accused by lady Ellesmere as the cause.

"You have persuaded him into the belief

lief that Rosabel is consumptive, and he sits moping at home like an owl, with a face like a ghost, and a heart as heavy as lead. As you have contrived to make them both sick, doctor Clements, to gratify yourself, I wish you would contrive to make them well again, to gratify me. I wish Rosabel was of age, that all these frights and fears, and plague and prosing, might be over;" and the tears of grief and anger mingled on the cheek of the artless lady Ellesmere.

Doctor Clements, who perceived the grief of the countess was real and unaffected, endeavoured to sooth her into composure; but every effort was unavailing, the aversion of her ladyship was too firmly rooted to receive any consolation at his hands, and they parted—with civility, indeed, but mutually irritated against each other.

The marquis was sitting with lady Rosabel, and doctor Clements, without seeming to perceive the alteration in his look
and

and manner, asked him to a friendly dinner, which the doctor was frequently in the habit of doing.

The marquis instantly complied, delighted to escape a large dinner-party at lord Conolly's, where they were always the gayest of the gay.

After dinner doctor Clements mentioned the accusation of lady Ellesmere to the marquis. The truant colour returned to suffuse his cheeks with the deepest crimson, and his hands veiled for a moment his glowing countenance.

“ I fear to incur your ridicule or your censure, my estimable friend, if I confess the truth ; yet give me your patient hearing, and I will tell you all—acknowledge the weakness—the fatality, shall I call it? —that has destroyed my youthful bloom, depressed the happy gaiety once so buoyant.”

His lordship then mentioned the beautiful unknown he had seen but for a moment in the apartment of lady Rosabel.

“ She

“ She blooms in my nightly visions, in my morning dream ; her heavenly form, her seraph smile, rest on my waking thoughts, and vain is reason—vain is manly pride, to repel this lovely intruder, this fondly-cherished vision, from my heart ; since that morning, fatal or blissful—I know not yet its most appropriate name—my gentle Rosa has been denied the solace of her sweet society : and now you have my secret, doctor Clements, be merciful and pity me. This seraph girl can be no stranger to you, my friend ; yet I forbore to make inquiries, lest you should esteem it a breach of the implicit faith I owed to the benevolent friends of Rosabel, and suffered this heart-corroding misery in silence, this doubt unmixed with hope, this certainty of being shunned, or, still more bitter the reflection, scorned.”

The countenance of doctor Clements beamed with all the benevolence of his heart ; the smile of gratified pleasure rested on his lip, as he spoke peace and comfort

fort to the bosom of his young friend.—
“ Three days ago I would have said—marquis of Heatherly, think of this cherub girl no more—she is the destined wife of another—destined too from her cradle; but her intended husband, unconscious of this destined happiness, has dissolved the air-built security of her guardian friend, and left her free to choose; he has fixed his fond, his not-to-be-alienated affections on another, as perfect in purity, almost as perfect in loveliness. Hope every thing most cheering to your heart, my excellent young friend, and let your recovered bloom and gaiety convince me of your firm reliance on my faith. I cannot now be more explicit—your lordship must allow me to dismiss this subject for the present.”

Abundant were the acknowledgments of the marquis; but the doctor good-humouredly silenced his expressive gratitude.—“ Reserve your thanks, my lord, till you have more solid cause for thankfulness than

red, either by death, or a wish to change, distressed foreigners were only allowed to supply the place so vacated.

“ To this asylum the young baronet was brought by his uncle, to be purified from the heresies of his father, and to be initiated in the different branches of literature, either polished or profound, in which many of these emigrant clergymen excelled.

“ The young Arthur soon became the plaything of age, and his docile temper received the instruction which was conveyed with gentle kindness ; and no fault was ever seen among them in this idolized boy.

“ A few weeks previous to his introduction to the Brothers of Charity, as they were pompously styled by Mr. M'Dermot, two new members had been admitted, to supply the place of two who had died of happy old age. They were both young, one a native of Italy, Isidore di Urbino—St. Pierre de Rosney, his companion, the descendant of a noble French family. A
young

young lad had followed their fortunes, and was admitted a domestic into the Asylum for the Brothers of Charity. Jean Dubois had been formerly servant to an opera-dancer, of some celebrity, at Paris, and by imitating his master, was himself no despicable proficient in the capering science. I am thus minute, to account for the many accomplishments you will find possessed by sir Arthur, on a more intimate acquaintance, when his time is not solely occupied by making love to the signora da Cortina.

“Jean Dubois was the attendant and much-loved companion of the juvenile baronet, and he soon taught him to caper, and cut, and dance, with equal agility as himself; while the good-natured Italian felt no degradation to play on his much-loved Cremona: every merry tune he was master of, for their gratification.

“The little hands of the baronet soon fastened on the Cremona of father Isidore, and the delighted Italian heard his own

tones imitated. Master of the science, and proudly fond of his pupil, sir Arthur, if he did not excel, fully equalled his master. Under his guidance, the uncommonly-fine voice of the baronet attained its present standard of perfection; while this petted darling was declared to be master of every accomplishment, endowed with every virtue, in the letters which his uncle received from the pious brotherhood; and Mrs. O'Dwyer displayed in her dressing-room many beautiful specimens of sir Arthur's skill, as a painter, finished beneath the guiding hand of St. Pierre de Rosney.

“ When sir Arthur had completed his twelfth year, his nurse, now a widow, returned to her family; she was a native of Kerry; her brother was, at this period, a respectable farmer, sober, industrious, and greatly esteemed in the neighbourhood; his large and well-regulated family, accompanied by their parents, regularly attended the chapel of the asylum on Sundays

days and holidays, and stood high in the estimation of the pious brotherhood.

"Mrs. Ryan was readily admitted to see her nurseling, and her grief was excessive, to find, though he had learned many languages, he had nearly forgot his own; Italian, French, and Spanish, he spoke with fluency and elegance, but an English word had never met his ear, since he became an inmate in the asylum, till the arrival of Mrs. Ryan. As her visits were inadmissible, after the first interview at the asylum, the entreaties of the young baronet prevailed, and he was permitted to meet his nurse at the well-conducted farmer O'Leary's, frequently accompanied by the fathers St. Pierre and Isidore; but Jean Dubois was his constant companion, and, next to his young master, was the idol of the farmer's family: he taught them to dance and to caper, and speak broken French, and they taught him, in return, to speak bad English, ride steeple chases, and dance the Irish jig; and in this society the Kerry

G 2

accent,

accent, which, among the peasantry, is really abominable, was fastened for ever on the baronet ; his fine musical ear greatly assisted to unharmonize his tongue ; his peculiar talent is a facility in learning languages, and in three years he became complete master of the Irish, which at that time he understood more perfectly than English ; and I have heard him frequently declare, with all the nationality which glows in his honourable heart, this attainment was his highest boast of knowledge.—

“ ’Tis a sorrowful thing to think of,” said farmer O’Leary, “ that my master’s son has no horse of his own, while I have horses and cows, and sheep and land, and all owing to the bountiful hand of his father ; and I was thinking, sister Norry, if you would ask our young master if he would be agreeable to do me the pleasure to accept of the chesnut filly, who is a beautiful little beast, sure-footed, and as sweet-tempered as himself, begging his pardon for making the comparison ; and Tim and
Terry

Terry could teach him to leap and to ride, seeing there is not two tighter or knowing lads in the way of horseflesh or horsemanship in the whole country : and it would be a mortal sin and a shame that our young master would not know how to ride, when he comes to have hunters and hounds of his own, as his father had before him, and that he could not be a member of the Lucan hunt, for want of knowledge, for all his great learning; and that would be a sorrowful sight to see, and a sorrowful thing to hear of, sister Norry, seeing who has a better right to be a member than his father's son, who comes of the best stock in the whole country, in the way of thick blood and ancient quality.'—' Learning !' muttered Mrs. Ryan—' I am sure it was a happy day for him that I came home, poor child, or he would not know how to say yes or no in his own mother tongue, as I may call it, for it is many a long day ago since the quality and the gentry conversed comfortably in Irish together; and how would

the young ladies in Dublin look at him, brother Jerry, when he began to jabber at them in Greek and Latin, and other outlandish lingos? I am sure they would think him an ignoramus in good earnest : and then, did not he learn to dance like a Christian among us, not standing on one leg, or springing up in the air, for all the world like a rope-dancer, or a stage-player—or with one hand stuck in his side, and the other pointed out, while he kept whirling round, like nothing on earth but a dancing teapot? and after all, brother Jerry, does not he look like a young colt, with his hair flying all about him? I was coaxing him for two hours yesterday, just to let me cut half-a-yard of it off; but no such thing, and I cried for spite at his stubbornness; but he said, though it went to his heart to vex me, it would break it altogether to grieve good father Anselmo, who took such pride to comb and curl it round his fingers; and though it often half-blinded him, not one hair should come off his

his

his head, while it gratified his own dear *père* Anselmo to look at it.'

"From sir Arthur I heard this conversation, which I have considerably abridged. He was an unsuspected auditor, and to gratify the kind-hearted farmer, he accepted the chesnut filly, on condition only of his taking two when the baronet became of age.

"I now introduce sir Arthur O'Dwyer as an equestrian of celebrity; he was foremost at fox or steeple chase, nor hedge nor ditch, nor brake nor bar, impeded his progress; and Tim and Terry O'Leary sounded his fame, and gloried in the triumph of young master sir Arthur; while Jean Dubois attended the feats and the frolics of his master, stuck firmly behind the fearless Tim or Terry, for two very good reasons; the first was, the unskilful hand of Dubois could never be taught to guide the rein, and, after two or three falls, gave up the attempt altogether; while he felt bold as a lion, unconscious of dread,

G 4

and

and careless of ridicule, when firmly seated behind either of the dauntless and skilful O'Learys; the other was, the good farmer found it quite sufficient to give up one horse, and he would not suffer his young master to run wild over the country, without either Tim or Terry to attend him. Thus all were pleased and happy; and sir Arthur esteems these the most halcyon days of his life.

“ His long and frequently-repeated absences from the asylum first grieved, and then alarmed, the pious brotherhood; and the first sound of reproof sir Arthur ever heard, was when father Anselmo accused him with want of affection to those friends that loved him so dearly.

“ Humbled even to tears, the truant confessed the fact, and promised, if they would allow him to race and ride on their own territory, he would pass the boundary no more.

“ The permission was instantly accorded, and many a summer's evening was whiled

whiled happily away by the artless brotherhood, as they witnessed the equestrian feats of their youthful favourite.

“ Jean Dubois, who had every reliance on the skill and good nature of the young O’Learys, first began to vary the scene, by standing up behind Tim or Terry, then to dance a few steps ; and the well-trained and good-tempered animal they always rode, in a short time became accustomed to the frolics of Dubois ; and Jean himself, gaining courage by practice, capered away, and the horse at full speed, but holding securely at the same time the shoulders of young O’Leary.

“ The baronet, who could with ease vault over two horses at once, thought he too should dance on horseback, and practised, for a long time, in secret. Little Norah, as he called his chesnut mare, was amenable to every frolic of her master, and seemed to enjoy the triumph of sir Arthur, as he dashed out an equestrian hero. Terror soon gave place to admiration,

tion, and the harmless frolics, the innocent gambols, of these young people, formed the recreation of the delighted and guileless brotherhood.

“ Thus happily passed the days of sir Arthur, unconscious of evil or sorrow, till he had nearly attained his sixteenth year. His uncle, Mr. O'Dwyer, had remained the last four years in England, that his only child, the fair Clementina, might receive the highest polish that education could bestow ; and Mr. O'Dwyer determined this phoenix in excellence should be the wife of his nephew, whom he was taught to believe a paragon of perfection ; and the future marchioness of Ballinderry elect returned to Ireland to celebrate her fifteenth natal day, at that period when sir Arthur was at the zenith of his glory, as an equestrian hero.

CHAPTER VIII

*The Guardian Uncle.*

“ ON a beautiful evening in June, when Nature wore her gayest livery, and feathered songsters warbled forth their carols gay, Mr. O'Dwyer left his carriage and servants at an inn, and proceeded to the asylum on foot, which was scarcely half-a-mile distant.

“ As he stood on an eminence which commanded a bold and distinct view of the romantic scenery around, his eyes suddenly rested on the lawn belonging to the asylum. Mr. O'Dwyer at first believed some optical delusion had taken place, and rubbed his eyes, to clear the charmed vision from his sight; but still the scene remained unchanged, and anger mingled

G 6

with

with astonishment at what he saw too clearly.

“ Beneath the spreading trees which ornamented the lawn, eleven of the pious brothers sat, contented and happy, enjoying the evening breeze, and the equestrian feats and harmless gambols of sir Arthur and his humble friends ; while father Isidore flourished away his merriest tune for their gratification and his own.— Do these holy and secluded fathers admit horse-jockeys or mountebanks into this sacred retreat from worldly vices, and from worldly cares ?” thought Mr. O’Dwyer, as his recumbent form rested against a tree, while he viewed the group before him.

“ The evening was sultry—sir Arthur was divested of his coat, and waistcoat, and his long hair, which flowed in innumerable ringlets over his shoulders, was loosely tied by a black ribbon ; he wore no hat, but a silk handkerchief bound round his brows, which Dubois had twisted so artfully, that at the distance he was from
Mr.

Mr. O'Dwyer, it had all the appearance of a cap and feather; and thus accoutred, he frolicked away, happy in the happiness he bestowed on them he loved so well, while Dubois and Terry received the plaudits due to their innocent ambition to please; and Tim, now the day's work was over, footed it merrily with one of his little brothers to the sound of the *Cremena*.

“At length, convinced the scene was sad reality, the lordly-bigoted and highly-incensed Mr. O'Dwyer descended from his lofty eminence, and trod the path which, winding round the valley, brought him to the asylum, and he appeared before the Brothers of Charity as the angry despot, willing, had he the power, to annihilate their present happiness—their future comfort.—‘When my most pious and much-lamented father-in-law,’ began Mr. O'Dwyer, ‘bestowed this munificent donation on the wandering sons of charity, mendicants, and fugitives, he believed his bountiful hand was extended to

to relieve the wants—to rescue from the deepest abyss of human misery, holy priests worthy of the religion they professed—worthy the master they professed to serve—holy men dead to sin—dead to all carnal vanities—dead to all carnal weakness and pleasures; and how have I, his successor, found you employed, ye faithless servants?—Neither watching or praying, but indulging in rioting—in carnal delights—the sanctity of this asylum bestowed by charity, profaned by mountebanks and horse-riders; while one, even of your own community, with unblushing effrontery, turns fiddler to these strolling vagabonds.’

“The leader of these vagabonds sprung from his horse with angry defiance on his brow, and Mr. O’Dwyer had no idea the almost gigantic youth before him, for sir Arthur had then attained his present height, was his nephew, the slender stripling he had parted from four years back—‘And pray, Mr. O’Dwyer,’ demanded the baronet, haughtily, in French, in which language
his

his uncle had addressed the brotherhood, ‘ which is it to prove, the purity of your Christian faith, or your polished high-bred manners, that you have thus dared to intrude, with insulting violence, into this asylum, sanctified as it is by the presence of these holy men, whose lives are pure and spotless before men, and I trust and believe, appear pure and spotless before the throne of Mercy?’

“ Mr. O’Dwyer turned to view the undaunted querist, who looked the stern indignation he felt at this unmanly attack, so severely made on his aged and defenceless friends.—‘ My child,’ said father Anselmo, gently, ‘ remember obedience is due to your uncle ; affection and respect should rest on your lips, my son, not insult, when you address your only surviving parent.’—‘ Can I be affectionate where I am called a stroller and a vagabond?—can I be respectful to him who loads with opprobrium and insult those friends, dear to my heart as the vital stream which warms it,

it, and which I would freely shed in defence of their happiness, or to secure their tranquillity? Let Mr. O'Dwyer sue for pardon, sinner as he is, from these pious fathers he has so grossly, so wantonly insulted; and then, if he conceives himself offended by any want of respect on my part, I am willing to make any apology, however humble, and to confess the cause of my commencing stroller and vagabond; at the same time I shall take the liberty to inform him, had those names sounded on my ear through any lips but his own, they should have cause to remember the falsehood to their life's end.'

"By the persuasion of father Anselmo, joined to the entreaties of the guileless brotherhood, the young hero was soothed into submission, but not till Mr. O'Dwyer apologized for his mistake in supposing his nephew a horse-jockey or a mountebank; his appearance had certainly more the look of a stroller than a gentleman; but he hoped these freaks would cease in future—

future—that his good friends, the fathers, might not suffer a diminution in the respect due to their age and religious profession by the folly of his nephew; and Mr. O'Dwyer further hoped the fathers would forget the severity of his rebuke, when they reflected it originated in their weak indulgence of this overgrown boy.

“ This ungracious apology, if apology it might be called, was accepted by the conciliating brothers, but it rested on the discerning mind of the young baronet as a bitter sarcasm; and though he forbore to speak his sentiments, his countenance was sufficiently expressive of his feelings.

“ The next morning Mr. O'Dwyer mentioned his intention of taking sir Arthur with him to Dublin, to see Mrs. and Miss O'Dwyer—‘ The streets of Dublin will be very dusty and disagreeable at this season of the year,’ remarked the baronet.

“ Indignation flushed the cheek of Mr. O'Dwyer—‘ I could scarcely suppose, sir Arthur, that the dust of the street would
be

be thought of before your aunt and cousin. I propose going to Bella Vista, my seat, near the Black Rock, in a few days; I hope it will meet the approbation of your very rural ideas, sir Arthur.'—'Cannot tell till I see it,' was the laconic reply. 'I am very happy, very contented, where I am, uncle O'Dwyer, and I have no wish to change.'

"Sad and sorrowful was the parting of sir Arthur from his friends, and Mr. O'Dwyer secretly determined the separation should continue as long as he held any power over the juvenile baronet.

"I was sitting with the ladies when sir Arthur made his appearance in Granby-row, not indeed the well-grown school-boy I expected to see, but a youthful Hercules, whose dignified and manly air bid defiance to childish control. His clownish gait and obsolete gallantry are equally assumed, and though no fop, sir Arthur always dressed well, and as a gentleman; his hunting-frock and cap were purposely

purposely abused, and his hair let to grow wild, to exhibit his first appearance to the signora as a wild Irishman, which the power of her sovereign beauty was predestined to humanize and subdue into love.—‘I wonder where papa picked up this wild man of the woods,’ said the all-accomplished Clementina, with affected terror; ‘I hope he is quite tame and harmless. This cannot be the paragon of perfection, sir Arthur O’Dwyer: oblige me, doctor Clements—inquire who that extraordinary-looking being is, and what brought him here;’ and the haughty Mrs. O’Dwyer looked the disdain she felt at this unwelcome intruder.

“I instantly recollected the expressive countenance—the open brow of my young relative, and bade him welcome with the affectionate goodwill I really felt; the cordial pressure of my hand was returned with grateful emotion, as he softly said—‘I have one relative I can love.’

“As if unwilling to approach the ladies,

dies, he took my arm, and placed himself beside me on a sofa. He remained for some time absorbed in his own reflections, while I took a more minute survey of this extraordinary yet interesting youth.

“ His bright and glossy hair floated in wild profusion over his shoulders, and parted, in clustering curls, on his ample forehead; he looked the hero of other days, divested of his armour; his flowing hair, his noble bearing, the fearless expression of his dark blue eye, his polished brow, bespoke the hero, not the puerile beau of modern times.

“ Mr. O'Dwyer had been in deep consultation with his lady, and now approached us.—‘ Sir Arthur,’ said he, with an air of haughty command, ‘ I wish to introduce you to Mrs. and Miss O'Dwyer.’—‘ I hope you have convinced the timmer-some young lady,’ said the baronet, with the true Kerry ‘twang, ‘ that the wild man of the woods wont bite her.’—‘ Heavens and earth!’ exclaimed Mr. O'Dwyer, ‘ where

‘where did you get that infernal brogue?’ for their conversation hitherto had passed in the French language, which sir Arthur spoke with graceful fluency.—‘Where I learned English, to be sure,’ replied the baronet, calmly, ‘at farmer O’Leary’s.’—‘How have I been deceived,’ cried the half-distracted Mr. O’Dwyer, ‘by these pious cheats, these horse-riding mountebank-loving priests! But I will revenge the misery and disappointment I have received at their hands, seven hundred fold; with the heavy hand of power I will restore them to their original state, and fugitives and beggars they shall once more wander in a foreign land.’

“The delirium, for I can give his conduct no better name, which had taken possession of Mr. O’Dwyer, was really frightful; he seemed scarcely conscious of his words or actions—he pulled the bell with great violence—‘Send Wilson here—I want him to humanize the savage-looking head of sir Arthur O’Dwyer. What do you stand

stand staring at, idiot? Tell Wilson to come and cut sir Arthur's hair; in its present Yahoo state he is not admissible among the friends I have invited to dinner.'—'Spare yourself the trouble, young man,' said sir Arthur, calmly; 'my head is my own, and not one hair shall come off it, to please either your master or his friends.'—'What means this insolent rebellion to my will?' and Mr. O'Dwyer stamped with furious violence. 'Arrogant boy, you shall learn obedience to your guardian; and your hair shall not only be cut, but be shaved off, if I will it so! Send Wilson here directly!'

"Sir Arthur sprung on his feet; his luminous eyes flashed with indignant fire; yet he spoke calmly to the servant.—'Be off, young man, I say, and that directly; I have more good manners, Yahoo as I am, than to speak my opinion of your master before his servant, seeing I have neither any thing good or agreeable to say about him; so be off, if you please.'

"The

“ The look which accompanied these words enforced obedience, and the servant left the room.—‘ Mr. O’Dwyer,’ said the baronet, ‘ in one of my mountebank rambles through the country, I saw a bird sitting on a bush, and this was the song he sung.—“ Every minor has a right to choose his guardian at fourteen; and take good advice, sir Arthur O’Dwyer,” said the little bird, “ and choose one for yourself, seeing the one you have is neither good, or agreeable, or faithful to his trust. The lord chancellor allows him one thousand pounds a-year for your education, and he wont allow one pound a-year to the pious fathers who took the trouble off his hands, and he leaves you, a shooler and a beggar like, to be reared by these charitable fathers; and, mark my words, sir Arthur, he will abuse and vilify them for all their trouble and cost, and call yourself a savage and a Yahoo, not fit to be seen by his friends and acquaintance.” So all the little bird said came out true, sure enough,

enough; so I am going to take his advice, with many thanks for his timely warning.

“ And before Mr. O'Dwyer recovered from his astonishment at this unexpected conduct of his high-spirited ward, sir Arthur had left the house.

“ I hurried after my young relative, leaving Mr. O'Dwyer raving like a maniac. My search was unavailing, though not a hotel, tavern, or lodging-house, in the vicinity of Granby-row, or far beyond it, escaped my most minute scrutiny. I returned home at night, weary and famished, and really unhappy about this interesting and high-spirited youth.

“ Two mornings after I received a note from an eminent lawyer, a distant relation of my mother's, requesting I would meet him, at the particular desire of our mutual relative, sir Arthur O'Dwyer; and my joy at again seeing the baronet was fully equalled by the surprise I felt at being named his guardian, if I would accept the trust; and, after going through the necessary

cessary forms, I returned with my new ward to Stephen's-green, divested of much serious anxiety on his account.

“ It often happens that some of the common people in Ireland have what they call long heads, that is, they are good politicians and lawyers in their own way. Farmer O'Leary was one of these sheer-minded beings, and he thought his young master used very badly by his father's brother ; he had no money, no horse, no clothes, in his opinion, fit for a gentleman, and he went to Dublin, for the express purpose of finding out what the chancellor allowed him.

“ O'Leary went to our relative, Mr. Gordon, to state the case, as he called it ; having also ascertained, with some trouble, the brotherhood got no remuneration whatever for their trouble.

“ Mr. Gordon gave him every information he required, and the farmer determined, if Mr. O'Dwyer did not act as he

ought to do by his master's son, a way should be found to make him ; and his conduct to the brotherhood, on his arrival from England, which his sons faithfully reported, made him reveal all he knew to his young master, and sir Arthur acted accordingly.

“ The rage of Mr. O'Dwyer was unbounded ; but he preferred refunding the money he received for the use of his nephew to a suit at law, who returned to the asylum, to enrich his ancient friends, having also ascertained that Mr. O'Dwyer had no power whatever over them or their inheritance.

“ About a year after the commencement of my guardianship, father Anselmo took ill, and I was summoned to attend him ; but he expired two hours before my arrival. I was shocked to perceive the alteration in the heart-grieved baronet ; all the florid colour of his cheek was gone, and a black silk handkerchief was bound tightly

tightly round his brows. In silence he took my arm, and led me to the chamber of death.

The smile of perfected happiness sat on the clay-cold lip; and the bright luxuriant tresses of sir Arthur were placed beneath his clay-cold hands, which were crossed over his bosom in the attitude of prayer: — ‘That hair,’ said the sorrowing baronet, ‘was his pride in life, if a saint so perfect could have any; death shall not separate from him that hair, hallowed by the kisses he bestowed on my infant head, which, for his sake, I would have worn, had he lived to see it, as silvery as his own.’

“Nothing material occurred to sir Arthur, except that he became a member of the Church of England, from conviction, like his father, till he completed his twenty-first year, when a spirit of wandering seized him, and he went to Spain; but he hastily returned on the removal of the royal family to France.

“While in Spain, sir Arthur formed an
H 2 intimacy

intimacy with a noble Spaniard, a dignitary of the Church, whom he calls Anselmo the Second. Assisted and accompanied by the benevolent baronet, this venerable prelate securely left Spain, sir Arthur having previously secured an immense property, in plate and jewels, which the noble Spaniard would never have ventured to remove.

“ Sir Arthur and the noble wanderer arrived safely in Ireland, where a number of his chosen friends, chiefly clergymen, who had left Spain before him, received the aged fugitive with joyful welcome. They have remained in the neighbourhood of Lucan for some years, in secluded but happy retirement.”

On Saint Patrick's night, the first mourning of the duchess of Dunbane was laid aside, the widow's cap was exchanged for the brilliant coronet, and her sable dress ornamented with a profusion of diamonds; but in the costume of the signora da Cortina were displayed the wealth and magnificence

ficence of an eastern princess ; the curling luxuriance of her light brown hair was confined by a wreath of diamonds, symbolic of the wearer ; it was the masterpiece of art and nature—everywhere a diamond could be placed to advantage, it sparkled there—nothing was profuse, yet nothing was wanting to complete the splendid elegance of her appearance.

The admiration of sir Arthur and his cousin sought no concealment ; they remained almost stationary, throughout the evening, near the signora and her daughter, who looked in vain for the vulgar caricatures which some Irish writers have placed even among the first nobility at the Castle ; they looked, without reflecting that the fertile imagination of an author must sometimes be allowed to poetize.

On the wings of delight flew the happy hours, which secured an honourable rank in life, at least while she remained in Ireland, to the signora da Cortina. The brilliant lustre of her eyes out-sparkled the

diamonds that rested on her snowy brow, at the triumph of security over heart-apalling doubt.

The next day Hammersley renewed his entreaties for a speedy rehearsal, and produced the opera, ready marked, for his fair friends to study.

“ I grieve, Mr. Hammersley, that we cannot gratify sir Arthur, and give this agreeable surprise to our friends,” said the signora ; “ our absence must be remarked during the time of rehearsal.”

“ My lovely friends, your faithful knights have formed a plan by which our secret is safely secured. Will you condescend to meet us an hour before breakfast in our little theatre ? Sir Arthur and I will be Hodge, Madge, Woodcock, Deborah, every one with whom you would require to rehearse the dialogue. Our friends are so perfect in their different characters, that one general rehearsal will be quite sufficient ; and while that is going on, we will contrive to keep lord and lady

lady Ellesmere completely out of our way. Have we your concurrence, your approbation, my lovely friends?"

"At that early hour, Mr. Hammersley, we must be observed by the servants; where is our security of secrecy then?"

"When the theatre was made, signora, the space was not sufficiently large to admit of dressing-rooms on the same floor; a private staircase was made from the theatre to the apartments beneath, in both houses, through which the performers were only admitted, and we dressed and changed our dresses without inconvenience; this passage is now locked up, but I will obtain the key from Mrs. O'Brien, and wait, with anxious hope, for your appearance to-morrow morning, to teach you the method of opening the spring with which it is fastened, independent of the lock which my cautious and very correct aunt insisted should be placed on the secret door, when the colonel disposed of this house without my knowledge. Your

grace may have remarked, among the many paintings which are placed on the staircase, one larger than the rest, in which Henry of Navarre is toiling in the smith's forge; that beautiful painting is close to my chamber-door, and the signora and I have often admired the expression of the hero's countenance, so animated, so playfully amused at the wonder-looking proprietor of the forge. The white-plumed hero guards the secret portal; just three soft knocks upon his polished helmet, and a knight, not less faithful to his trust, not less the enthusiastic admirer of beauty, than this laurel-crowned hero, will attend to guide your gentle footsteps."

The eloquent entreaties of Hammersley prevailed over every affected scruple of the signora, and both ladies, with infinite satisfaction, saw his parting bow unwitnessed by lord Ellesmere, that this fascinating young man had for one day escaped the angry and jealous frowns of his lordship.

To lord Ellesmere the soft-eyed Frances
declared

declared her intention of rehearsing the dialogue only with the signora till the general rehearsal took place; and his lordship, subdued by the powerful witchery of her charms, believed her faithful as fair, and himself the lord of her undivided affections.

CHAPTER IX.

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### *The Irish Necromancer.*

A FEW days after his confidential conversation with doctor Clements, the marquis of Heatherly was sitting with his cousin, when the recess suddenly opened, and a singular-looking being stood before them; in the days of superstition or romance, his appearance could admit but of one opinion—he was a necromancer or magician; his tall majestic figure was enveloped in a

black cloak, lined with scarlet, and a cap of the true magical shape, lined and stained with scarlet, covered his head; his face was one continued mass of wrinkles, and his dark luminous eyes sparkled with unearthly fire.—"Marquis of Heatherly," he began, in a growling tone, which sounded like distant thunder, "the maid you love must be the gift of your uncle lord Coldbrook; her nearest relation is not in Ireland; pledge me your sacred word of honour you will not seek her hand in marriage, till lady Rosabel is restored to happiness and her husband, and I will not oppose your meeting; comply not, and you see her no more, till after the period I have mentioned. You must promise also to seek not, search not, but give implicit faith to all I now assert, and, without the perilous attempt to breast the meat, or brave the terror enchanted hall, the maid and laurel crown shall be your own."

"My very words repeated!" thought the marquis, as his glowing countenance betrayed

betrayed his feelings. " This must be the leader of Rosabel's secret friends.—Spirit of air, or formed of mortal mould, I bow submissive to your will; nor would I make this peerless girl my bride, till, faithful to my trust, I had secured the happiness of those friends dear to my soul as honour. I pledge you my sacred honour, I will not seek or search into what the benevolent friends of Rosabel may wish to keep concealed; that implicit faith shall be my motto. Though the very order of creation should seem to be reversed, my faith and patience shall win the maid on your own terms, and the laurel wreath of victory be mine."

" Fair words cost little pains to courtly lords; but your honour is a sacred pledge I will not doubt. Marquis of Heatherly, farewell! to-day you meet your promised bride; seek not, search not, and remember implicit faith!"

This mysterious being waved his hand with solemn dignity, and slightly bowing



his head to lady Rosabel, left the apartment.

On that day colonel O'Brien gave a large dinner party, which lady Rosabel was allowed by doctor Clements to attend, as her numerous friends could there group around her, to keep off inquiring eyes, though the present mode of dress, short waist, full draperies, and her own fragile form, left as yet no cause for suspicion, except what her own timid consciousness might attract, unsupported by her friends; and for this reason the gentle girl was never allowed to appear in any but their most select parties.

The marquis of Heatherly, glowing with hope, his bosom filled with all the romance of early love, entered the drawing-room of colonel O'Brien; and the fair lady of the mansion presented her daughter, Flora O'Brien, to the Ellesmere party.

The surprise, the astonishment of the marquis was too powerful for concealment; it glowed on every expressive feature, it sparkled

sparkled in his brilliant eyes, for the beautiful unknown and Flora O'Brien were the same.

Suddenly the voice of the necromancer growled softly on his ear—"Marquis of Heatherly, remember your promise of implicit faith!"

He turned to seek the luminous eyes of the necromancer, but no person was near him but sir Arthur and Lucius O'Brien, who were conversing with a gentleman, dignified and elegant in his appearance, whom young O'Brien introduced as his uncle, the earl of Dunleer.

The smooth and polished brow of the earl bore a striking contrast to the wrinkled visage of the wizard, as the polished urbanity of his manners bore no semblance to the stern dictatorial bearing of the magician; and his voice might almost be styled harmonious, it was so uncommonly pleasing.

"Bewitched or not bewitched," thought the marquis, as he walked to the window,

to

to compose his features, and to appear, if possible, any thing but the bewildered being he really was.

He was followed by doctor Clements, who playfully asked the marquis if he expected to meet a disenchanted princess, a sylph or fairy, that he fled from little Flora O'Brien, the daughter of a simple commoner?

“A maid of mortal mould, my good friend,” said the marquis. “I am more than half inclined to believe myself under the influence of magic. Don’t laugh at my folly, doctor; I cannot endure even the smile of ridicule, though conscious I deserve it.” He then mentioned his extraordinary visitor of the morning, and the promise he had made—“But when I saw this seraph girl openly acknowledged as the daughter of a man I would proudly call my father, I believed the scene of the morning was the frolic of some humourist, acquainted with the secret passage, to amuse himself at the expence of my credulity,

dulity, when the well-remembered voice of the wizard, unmatched on this earth beneath, sounded in my ears—"Remember your promise of implicit faith!" but I looked in vain for the magician's wrinkled phiz; and though reason scorns the idea of magic power, I must acknowledge my mind, at this moment, is all chaos and confusion."

"I told you, marquis, that we had a friendly goblin in our family, whom we all obey and acknowledge as our chief. You have seen him, marquis—trust him and doubt not; he has not imposed on your credulity. I cannot be more explicit—seek not, search not, and be implicit faith your motto. From the hand of lord Coldbrook you must demand this cherub girl; her nearest relation is not in Ireland."

Unadorned by art, Flora O'Brien was nature's most beautiful task; her plain white frock was devoid of ornament; her beautiful hair, of rich golden brown, was simply fastened by a comb, yet all the  
graces

graces which art had forced around the duchess of Dunbane, sported with native gaiety in every look, and word, and smile, of the artless Flora, whom her friends treated as a playful child, that she might escape the glance of malignant envy from the signora and her daughter, lest they might watch too closely the expressive eyes of Heatherly; and a hint from doctor Clements made him confine that admiration to his own bosom, to secure the peace of Rosabel, which would have been his proudest boast to acknowledge.

“How beautiful Miss O’Brien is!” remarked the signora, anxious to ascertain the real opinion of Hammersley.

“She will be a fine girl, signora; at present she is only a very pretty child.”

“Child!” repeated the duchess; “Miss O’Brien is as tall as I am.”

“If she was as tall as a May-pole,” and he spoke with all the assumed consequence of juvenile seniority, “she is a child for all that. I am only twenty, and both my  
sisters

sisters are younger, but little Flora is the youngest of us all ; we always called her a child, and treated her as a child ; and a child she is, if she was as high as the house. Many girls in this country don't grow an inch after they are twelve years old, and Flora is one of these overgrown children."

The signora, perfectly convinced there was no rival near the throne, allowed the age and the beauty of Miss O'Brien to rest in peace. Soon after the signora took occasion to mention the earl of Dunleer, who was standing near them.

" His lordship is brother to Mrs. O'Brien, and has adopted her only daughter, little Flora, who resides constantly with him. Lord Dunleer is much the best Hawthorn on any stage, and our splendid little theatre was the sole act and contrivance of his lordship."

Sir Arthur, on this day, was obliged to attend a county meeting, and lord Dunleer supplied his place, as adulator to the  
signora ;

signora ; and if the exchange had continued for life, no objection would have been made on the part of the fair Italian, as, independent of his rank, the manners of his lordship had all the polish of high-bred fashion.

The marquis of Heatherly, no longer prevented from meeting the beautiful Flora in the apartment of lady Rosabel, gratefully acknowledged his gentle cousin was a copyist from nature, as she drew the picture of his Flora's mind ; and the benevolent doctor Clements rejoiced in the happiness he had so anxiously, so zealously, promoted.

At length the signora became anxious to display her manifold attractions to the assembled friends of sir Arthur ; and this well-rehearsed opera was fixed for representation on the first of May.

The parties of Mrs. O'Brien were always well attended, her entertainments given in the first style of elegance, and the vice-regal

regal pair never suffered any engagement to prevent their being present at her concerts.

Lady Glenfield felt almost anxious for the first of May, as lord Dunleer had promised that her entertainment for that evening should surpass any her excellency had ever met with in Ireland.

“ You must be very ill, and require the attendance of doctor Clements, on the twenty-sixth, signora.”

“ If it is equally pleasing to you, Mr. Hammersley, I shall prefer being in very good health. We are engaged to lord Conolly's, on that day, and his parties are always so delightful, that the very idea of not being there might make me sick in good earnest.”

“ Then farewell,” cried Hammersley, with a tragedy flourish, “ to our grand rehearsal! a long farewell to all our hope of excellence on the first of May!”

“ Do be explicit, Hammersley,” said the half-alarmed duchess.

“ Sweetest



“Sweetest Rosetta, the explanation is this—we have fixed on the twenty-sixth for our grand rehearsal. The signora must get a feverish cold, a hoarseness, a sore throat, no matter what, that will confine her to the house, by the orders of doctor Clements, who is to be our sir William Meadows. The doctor may perhaps be induced to allow his fair patient to take a family dinner at Mrs. O’Brien’s, to quiet the apprehensive fears of lady Ellesmere for her friend; to give up a party at lord Conolly’s, where fascination is so abundant and so varied, would be out of all reason to expect from her ladyship. Mrs. O’Brien will take charge of her invalid friend, and the Argus-eyed guardian must attend his lady wife and lady mother to the feast of lord Conolly, with what appetite he may. Mrs. O’Brien has sent her excuses to lord Conolly’s, that prince of old bachelors, to entertain a large party at home. The rehearsal over, we are to trip it on the light fantastic toe, and be as happy as love and beauty

beauty can make us. And now, signora, sick or not sick? that is the question."

"Oh, sick, by all means, Mr. Hammer-sley! We leave every thing to your superior management."

The day before the expected gala at lord Conolly's, the signora complained of a shivering sore throat, and violent pain in her head. Doctor Clements, who was present, felt her pulse, and then declared, with true medical gravity of countenance, that if signora da Cortina wished to escape serious illness, she must go instantly to bed; and with due formality the doctor wrote a prescription, which he desired might be taken as directed, or he would not be answerable for the consequences.

The parting bow of doctor Clements was unusually solemn, as he hurried off, anxious to escape the storm fast gathering on the brow of lady Ellesmere.

"I am sure," cried her ladyship, angrily, "that disagreeable old fright wants to make you sick in good earnest, signora. I declare

declare you shall take none of his stops ; if you are apprehensive of any danger, send for doctor Percival at once, whose skill and good nature you may rely on ; but this fright of a man might keep you in bed till our grand concert was over, just to shew his power, and plague our hearts out. I hope, when you are married to sir Arthur, you wont let him hector and domineer in his own quiet way, persuading people they are sick, to shew his great skill. I am sure he nearly preached and pressed both Heatherly and Rosabel out of the world. I declare I never was so irritated or so angry as that quiet-going torment of a doctor has made me. I suppose he expected a lecture, he was in such a hurry to be gone ; for though his bow was like the grim king of the ghosts, he skipped off like a harlequin."

Sir Arthur came the next morning to Merion-square, and doctor Clements dispelled his anxiety and fear, extremely well acted, by declaring the signora sufficiently recovered

recovered to take a family dinner at Mrs. O'Brien's ; but the fair duchess would not be separated from her friend, despite the almost energetic anger of the countess, and the evident disquietude of her lord.

“ And now, my lady,” said the baronet, “ as my heart is quite at ease on the subject of the signora not being downright sick, and seeing I have every reliance on the skill and great wisdom of my cousin, the doctor, both in sickness and in health, I may attend the county meeting with great comfort and heart's ease ; and I will bring my young cousin Frank to be present, by that he may know how to behave himself when he comes to his estate, as every landholder should do who has the good of his country at heart ; not by heading nonsensical cabals, my lady, and finding fault with others, but shewing good example, by acting properly himself, and supporting, by all lawful means, as in duty bound, the king and constitution, with true loyalty and zeal ; to learn how to banish  
poverty

poverty from his estate, not by the arm of power, my lady, but with the open hand of benevolence ; to cherish, not to oppress the peasantry. There is more true patriotism, in my mind, to reside among one's own tenantry, and keep want and sorrow from their door, than to keep spouting away in the imperial parliament about the misery and distress in Ireland ; and these masters of eloquence, fine only upon paper, contribute most largely to the distresses they harangue so much about, by rack-renting their tenants at home, to supply their own extravagance abroad ; while the book-making gentry, who live by their wits, abuse the country which gave them birth, to fill their pockets. The writings of these scribbling poetizers, my lady, to my mind, are like the twopenny pictures stuck up in our petty print-shops, which make a man look like a monkey, and a fine lady like a scarecrow ; no matter how vile the caricature is, even on their own country, if it brings money to these lack-  
land

land kind of gentry : and yet all these people have the assurance to call themselves *patriots*, my lady ; no wonder other countries should make little of the Irish nation, seeing they are so ready to make little of and abuse themselves." And sir Arthur made his bow, the ardour of true patriotism glowing on his honest countenance.

On the morning of that evening destined to bestow such unexpected pleasure on their assembled friends, sir Arthur and lord Dunleer called in Merion-square, to request her grace of Dunbane, and the signora da Cortina, would come early to Mrs. O'Brien's, in the evening, to rehearse a grand chorus, in which his lordship affected to believe them not sufficiently perfect.

The consent was instantly accorded, and the ladies returned by the secret passage, to change the dress of the young duchess ; that of the signora was previously arranged, with the most consummate

art, to attract the admiration her heart panted to obtain from the friends of sir Arthur. Her triumph felt secured, and hope and fancy waved high their golden pinions, as they firmly bound the coronet of Ballinderry around her polished brow.

As soon as they could leave the drawing-room, without being remarked, after the arrival of the viceregal party, colonel and Mrs. O'Brien retired to dress for their respective characters, Justice Woodcock and Mrs. Deborah. Lord Dunleer, whose dress as Hawthorn was soon arranged, remained with lord and lady Glenfield.

When lord Dunleer received the secret summons, all was ready, his lordship presented his arm to lady Glenfield. As they continued to ascend, "When are we to stop?" was legibly written on the brow of his fair companion; and when arrived at the upper landing-place, her excellency good-humouredly remarked—"My lord Dunleer, we have gained the summit of perfection, for we can go no higher."

The

The grand entrance was suddenly thrown open, and lady Glenfield sportively declared her eyes rested on charmed ground. The viceregal box was lined with mirrors, which reflected on every side the gay and festive scene, bordered with flowery wreaths, so richly perfumed, that the gales of Arabia seemed to breathe around. The supporting pillars were twined with roses and myrtle; the canopy was composed of purple velvet, richly bordered with gold, and festooned with roses, and the folds of the flowing drapery confined by superb golden cord and tassels on the top; and in front of the canopy was placed the royal arms, supported on either side by beautiful transparencies of Britannia and Hibernia, wreathed round with garlands of roses, myrtle, and laurel. The chairs of state were covered with painted velvet, superbly gilt and ornamented, and sufficient space was allowed for the usual number of attendants.

“God save the King!” sounded harmo-



nious welcome to the viceregal pair, who, ever willing to be gratified and happy, beheld with admiring wonder the splendid scene.

When the curtain drew up, lady Ellesmere could scarcely believe the scene she witnessed real, till the loud plaudits, which echoed through the house, at the conclusion of the introductory duet, roused her into certainty.

“Where could they have studied? where could they have rehearsed?” said her ladyship, addressing her only companion, the marchioness; for lord Ellesmere, his heart corroded with jealousy, removed to a distant part of the theatre, to watch, unobserved, every look and every movement of the young duchess.

Flora O'Brien and her friends grouped, as usual, round lady Rosabel, protected by the marquis of Heatherly.

“They must have rehearsed and studied at midnight,” continued the countess. “I hate secrets, they look so like deception; and

and these ladies have no right to have any secret, any concealment, from me."

"My dear Louisa," said the extenuating marchioness, "be not too fastidious. This surprise was intended to bestow unexpected happiness, and has, no doubt, cost them many a sleepless night."

Lady Ellesmere continued for some time dissatisfied and irritable, fretfully declaring such secret conduct was very extraordinary. But the Glenfield party enjoyed the present happiness without alloy; and even lord Orlington consented to be amused, without being mischievous or disagreeable. Never was theatre so thronged with elegance and beauty.

After the usual dance by the characters, sir Arthur advanced, arrayed in a wild but becoming costume, which displayed to great advantage his symmetrical form. He was lightly bound, and led on in rosy fetters, by the signora and her daughter, habited as wood nymphs, followed by Hammersley and his two sisters, with Lucius

O'Brien, in pastoral habits ; and a ballet was performed, with such perfect elegance and finished grace, as might have claimed the scientific applause even of a Parisian audience.

“ Never !” exclaimed lord Glenfield, “ never did I witness so gracefully danced a ballet ! the action so chaste, the countenance of each performer so illumined with smiles of real happiness !”

“ And my charming sir Arthur !” cried lady Glenfield, eagerly, “ you must acknowledge him, my lord, the prince of Irish dance and song.”

Sophia and his excellency spoke very softly.

“ I should be extremely delighted to see sir Arthur divested of his mask (why he wears it baffles my utmost penetration), and appear in his real character ; his present manner seems to me the very perfection of good acting. In a conversation I had with the baronet yesterday, I was not a little surprised at the extensive knowledge,

knowledge, keen penetration, and profound learning, he unconsciously displayed; the stores of his mind are unbounded; he is equally respectable as a philosopher, politician, and patriot. To-night his clownish gait is quite forgotten in the dance; his step majestic, and his air not only dignified, but graceful; he puzzles me most confoundedly. Yet sir Arthur O'Dwyer is not the man to be questioned, if he wills it not, even by deputed *royalty*."

Before the conclusion of the second act, the good humour of lady Ellesmere was perfectly restored; and her ladyship honestly confessed the pleasure she derived from the entertainment of the evening.

Every one was grateful and gay, save only lord Ellesmere; the scorpion stings of jealousy agonized his heart, and he secretly determined not to remain one single day in Ireland, after lady Rosabel had completed her eighteenth year.

At supper lord Glenfield repeated his  
14 thanks

thanks for the unexpected pleasure he enjoyed throughout the evening.—“ I never witnessed,” continued his lordship, “ such union of excellence in acting and singing ; but the dancing was unparalleled. Sir Arthur, I hail you the prince of dance and song ! but in what does not sir Arthur O'Dwyer excel ? ”

“ Barring eloquence, my lord lieutenant,” said sir Arthur, with a look which brought a blush and a smile on the cheek of lord Glenfield, as he gaily said—“ I will have no exceptions, sir Arthur ; the slipper, as you called it yesterday, I am half inclined to believe, can be slipped off or on at pleasure ; but the words of sir Arthur are always moulded by courtesy and solid good sense.”

The blush was now transferred to the cheek of sir Arthur, which glowed with crimson brightness.—“ Praise from you, my lord lieutenant, would make the most humble vain, seeing it is no easy task to  
find

find in a courtier a soldier and a gentleman, and, what to my mind is the noblest boast of all, an honest man ;” then bowing to lady Glenfield, requested to know if he might sing the “ Coolin ” for her excellency ? evidently to avoid the continuation of this complimentary dialogue, which nevertheless was perfectly sincere on both sides.

The next morning lord Glenfield mentioned sir Arthur to his lady.—“ I am really grieved, Sophia, at the very great attachment evinced by this most excellent man for signora da Cortina. On reflection, Orlington may be perfectly right, with respect to this Italian, whose birth and parentage, like the cosmogony, or creation of the world, was never yet thoroughly accounted for. Orlington, chiefly resident in England, was a daily witness of the conduct of his relative, sir Charles Selwyn, and the estimation this fair lady was held in by society, while we remained abroad with the regiment, equally unconscious and careless

of his actions. I recollect seeing lady Selwyn when I was a boy, and she was the most disagreeable, good-for-nothing little woman in existence; the gay and gallant sir Charles, attracted by her large fortune, married her, and her ladyship died two years after in France, where she had been but six months; and here it was this violent friendship took place between her ladyship and the signora. It must be fancy's sketch, Sophia, for lady Selwyn had neither soul, or sense, or feeling, to impart or receive such obsolete or romantic attachment. Sir Charles Selwyn died a ruined man, and left his daughter a beggar on the charity of her friends. The signora da Cortina has, I am well informed, fifty thousand pounds in the English funds, and jewels, to my own knowledge, sufficiently splendid to decorate a princess. Could any woman be chaste, and consent to remain beneath the roof of the most profligate, the greatest libertine in England? Beneath his roof this wealth, this  
plunder

plunder I may call it, must have been accumulated. Orlington, but an hour ago, offered to prove every word he had asserted on our first coming to Ireland, and mentioned some men of rank, who openly boast their intimacy with this syren, both before and after the death of sir Charles Selwyn. I will write to England immediately, to those who will not deceive me, and ascertain the real truth; the noble-minded sir Arthur O'Dwyer shall not be the dupe of this all-accomplished actress, if I have power to prevent it."

A few days after lady Rosabel accompanied Flora O'Brien to Hubert Castle, the seat of lord Dunleer, near Lucan, where her ladyship was to remain some time, by the orders, as lady Ellesmere called it, of doctor Clements. Her confinement was expected to take place in June, and every necessary preparation was arranged by the matron hand of Mrs. O'Brien.

The marquis of Heatherly was a con-



stant and welcome guest at Hubert Castle, and grew every day more highly in the estimation of colonel O'Brien and lord Dunleer. His eloquent eyes only told the language of his heart; for, faithful to his promise, the marquis spoke not of love to Flora, her father, or her uncle; but fondly, in secret, anticipated the blissful hour, when he could fearlessly claim his promised bride from the valued hand of his uncle, lord Coldbrook.

One night, after the family party had separated, the marquis entered his dressing-room, threw open the window, and leaning over the balcony, admired the moonlight scene, while love's young dream glowed brightly in his honourable bosom; when a silvery voice, of sweetest harmony, sounded softly on his ear.

"The dews of the evening most carefully shun, marquis of Heatherly; preserve your health for Flora and for love."

The marquis sprang into the room, but search and scrutiny were vain, no figure met

met his sight, but—" Seek not, search not," growled softly through the apartment.

The next day lady Rosabel became the happy mother of a living boy, fair as the opening day, in the eyes of his youthful mother.

Mrs. O'Brien secretly conveyed the heir of lord Fitzauburne to a careful nurse, who had formerly been her own maid, and gold and gratitude combined to keep her silent respecting her young charge, with whose parentage she was unacquainted.

## CHAPTER X.

*The Stiletto.*

FIVE weeks after lady Rosabel became a happy mother, lord Ellesmere received a large packet from his son-in-law, the duke of Dunbane. It contained a very fine drawing, exactly coloured, of the stiletto which was found covered with blood near the murdered duke, and a list of the subscriptions which had been entered into by the nobility and gentry in the neighbourhood, as a reward for apprehending the assassin of the late duke of Dunbane. The name of the present duke was followed by the sum of ten thousand pounds, and this sum was nearly equalled by the general subscription, all of which the duke of Dunbane promised to guarantee to the person

person or persons who should bring to condign punishment the murderer of his brother; and his grace requested lord Ellesmere would get this list printed, with his promise annexed, at the top of which was to be placed a coloured print of the stiletto; and the duke most earnestly requested the Irish friends of lord Ellesmere would have these lists, so printed, distributed through the country, and that no expence might be spared.

“Not only the united kingdoms, but France, Italy, Spain, America, all shall be searched for the assassin of this universal friend to all mankind. I mourn him as a national loss; my individual misfortune and regret who can appreciate?”

At the conclusion of this letter, the duke mentioned that his lovely Geraldine had presented him with an heir, three days before, and both were in perfect health.

“I declare,” said the highly-offended countess, “I never heard any thing so extraordinary.”

traordinary. before. Does the duke of Dunbane suppose that the health and safety of our beautiful Geraldine is of less consequence to her parents than his brother, who is so long rotting in his grave, poor man, that his grace mentions her at the fag-end of his letter like a poor relation? I am sure it is better for him his brother is where he is, and I dare say he thinks so himself, with all his preaching and prosing. How extraordinary to expect our Irish friends should go flying round the country like hawkers and pedlars, to distribute his lists and his pictures! I declare I am quite amazed at his conduct altogether."

While the countess continued her angry animadversions on the duke's letter, sir Arthur was busily engaged in examining the newly-arrived drawing—"It is very neatly executed—very neatly done indeed," said the baronet, "and a very pretty little weapon it is, and much fitter, in my mind, for a lady's hand to flourish

flourish away with in make believe tragedy, than the grasp of an assassin, seeing those kind of gentry, if the blade is good, are not over curious about dressing out the handle with gold and jewels."

"Robert Bruce!" repeated the signora, as she minutely examined the drawing; "it is a Scottish name. Perhaps this weapon is what they call the dirk in Scotland: I have heard of its being still worn, particularly in the Highlands."

As the signora spoke, her features wore the semblance of perfect innocence—of feminine softness the most captivating, and no tinge of colour deepened on her conscious cheek.

"The dirk is certainly a Scottish weapon," said doctor Clements, "though now, I believe, seldom worn, even in the Highlands. The shape is very different from the stiletto, which is an instrument of death almost peculiar to Italy and Spain. The dirk is worn and used openly, but the stiletto worn and used with secrecy; and

and I am quite of sir Arthur's opinion, that this richly-ornamented little weapon is better suited to a lady's hand, or lady's page, than the grasp of an assassin."

But still the brilliant bloom of the signora remained unchanged, unfaded, while the mingled tears of art and terror flowed rapidly over the cheeks of the youthful widow—of terror at the dread of discovery; but how or why she knew not, of art, to prove her genuine affliction for the loss of her husband, so much lamented, so generally deplored.

Hammersley soothed the soft sorrow of the lovely mourner with all a lover's art; his arm encircled her waist—her head reclined unconsciously upon his shoulder, and for a moment his polished cheek rested on her snowy forehead.

Lord Ellesmere could endure no more—"Duchess of Dunbane," he cried, in a voice of stern command, "the widow's tears should be sacred from the breath of wanton dalliance; retire with the signora,  
your

your more appropriate companion in this hour of affliction than an amorous young man, whose light-hearted boyhood must stamp him, in the mind of sage discernment, as light of faith and constancy; Ephesian tears can never gain respect."

The countenance of Hammersley lost all its youthful softness; indignation sparkled over his speaking countenance—"My lord," cried he haughtily, "we meet again, and I will prove to your lordship light-hearted boyhood will not preclude my acting as a man."

"Cousin Frank—my young cousin Frank," said the baronet, forcibly detaining the indignant Hammersley, "you must not part in anger with our good friend, my lord Ellesmere, seeing he had no wish in life, I am quite certain and sure, to offend you when he scolded the young duchess; besides, cousin Frank, he is a guardian and a grandfather, and age is honourable."

Lord Ellesmere felt at that moment  
ready



ready to annihilate them both; but certain some qualification was necessary for his frenzied rudeness, his lordship stammered out a most ungracious apology, which was as ungraciously received by the youthful Hotspur; but sir Arthur O'Dwyer, affecting to believe them perfectly reconciled, took the arm of his young kinsman, and left the house.

Doctor Clements, in a soft whisper, requested the marquis of Heatherly would follow him into colonel O'Brien's. The doctor was waiting for him in the hall, and the placid countenance of the benevolent physician was unusually agitated, as he brought the marquis through the secret passage into the theatre. He then stopped for a moment, and softly said—"Be on your guard, my lord Heatherly; the slightest noise, the softest word, might mar our well-laid plans. Be silent, be secret, and mark well what you may hear."

Doctor Clements then conducted the wondering young man to the private  
staircase

staircase in lord Ellesmere's house. The earl of Dunleer joined them immediately, but he spoke not, and his lordship's manner was solemn, almost to sternness.

This staircase was placed close beside one of the rooms on the second floor, and the marquis, with silent wonder, beheld a trap-door removed from the wall by doctor Clements, so artfully contrived, that it opened and closed without the slightest noise. A large painting on the inside covered the aperture, through which a few small holes had been carefully bored, completely out of casual observation: the dressing-room of the duchess of Dunbane was thus given to view, and shortly after her grace entered, weeping bitterly, and supported by the signora da Cortina.

“ Oh, signora! oh, my mother!” said the weeping beauty, “ why did you drop that dreadful stiletto, so remarkable, so richly jewelled, that even the liberal-minded, the unsuspecting sir Arthur O'Dwyer remarked

remarked it was only fitted for a lady's hand."

"Foolish girl!" said the signora, "banish these weak, these unnecessary fears, unworthy the daughter of Isidera. Look not—act not so like your father, don Juan St. Carlos, who wavered equally in good and ill—excellent in nothing, and make me love you less. Be firm, and be your mother's pride—the only object of my fond idolatry. Who can trace Robert Bruce to Eugenia da Cortina? Not one. That secret lies buried in the grave of perjured Edward. What then have I to fear? As I drew the stiletto from the bosom of your husband, it breathed the sweetest incense to my heart of gratified revenge. My Antoniette was now free, and exultation throbbed to ecstasy in my bosom, as I contemplated the mighty, fallen, cold, powerless, dead, by the feeble hand of scorned insulted woman. Lord William hastily approached—I dropped the blood-stained

stained weapon, and escaped. Had it been found on me, my doom was sealed—had the blood with which it was covered stained my peasant's garb, Isadora of Italy would soon have ceased to breathe; but, free as the airy lapwing, I returned to England. No ghost or goblin damned haunted my midnight dream or morning slumber; but sweet and balmy was the sleep which closed my eyelids. D'Aveyro and the duke rested as peaceful in the tomb of their lordly ancestors, as the infant Frances Selwyn that I restored early to the bosom of her mother, that my Antoniette might securely enjoy her name and honourable rank in society. Could the haughty, the malignant D'Aveyro haunt my footsteps, and cry revenge and murder in my ear, where then would be the bloom of health and beauty? Could the pure—the unearthly-minded duke whisper softly to my heart—'Let penitence and prayer employ those hours so wasted in worldly

worldly joys—repent, and be forgiven; where then would be the joyous smile of festive happiness, the rosy wreath of love, and all the luring witcheries of life? Could the infant Frances wail from her tomb, and say—‘Merciless thou art—expect no mercy!’—Could all this be, then might I believe the monkish fables of a world to come, and be a brain-crazed penitent through terror. But no, Antoniette, it cannot be; the grave is silent, and—for ever.”

The signora spoke in the Spanish language, which was always the case when alone with her daughter; but this precaution was of little avail; her present auditors lost not a word of dreadful import. The marquis, though dreadfully shocked, had still sufficient command over his feelings to remain still and silent; but so marble-looking was his countenance, that he appeared the stony statue of agonized surprise—“Oh, my aunt! my guileless, unsuspecting

suspecting aunt !” thought this honourable heart grieved young man, “ how are you associated with infamy and murder !”

These painful reflections were disturbed by the voice of lord Ellesmere—“ Frances of Dunbane,” he cried, “ too dearly have I bought you, with loss of peace and honour, to have the prize so purchased torn from my grasp by the braggart hand of beardless boyhood. I will not sink alone into the fathomless abyss of sorrow and despair you have prepared to receive me, faithless and fickle Frances ! No—on my soul’s best hopes, if any yet is left for me to cling to, I will not ; you and the signora shall fall, deep, deep into the gulf profound of ruined happiness and blasted fame. Loudly will I proclaim that Frances of Dunbane, that snow-drop of apparent purity, has been my willing mistress—that ten years ago I shared the favours of signora da Cortina with sir Charles Selwyn—with every one that could bring the sparkling diamond, the costly pearl, or blushing

blushing ruby, to deck the bosom of this mercenary beauty, till disgusted with her avarice, and weary of her art, I left her to caress, despoil, and flatter some other fool that would be as welcome as the former; and when my glorious vengeance is complete, this hand shall silence the frenzied babbler for ever, for Ellesmere will never live to be the mark of scorn. Reverse the picture, too-lovely, too-fascinating Frances, and bind me still your fettered slave. Dismiss the arrogant, the assuming Hammersley; crush for ever his presumptuous hopes of love and wedded happiness, and you will find me grateful beyond expression. The signora shall still bask in the sunbeam of viceregal favour, and be the bride of manly excellence—the future marchioness of Balinderry. Frances, your choice is free; but remember, you have no changeling, no boy, to deal with. Within this hour the dismissal of Hammersley must be sent, written by your own hand; he has not yet made his proposals in the regular form.

What

What then? I care not for appearances; his visits are not admissible—they shall not.”

“Oh! give me till to-morrow,” cried the weeping Frances; “my unsteady hand would prove the anguish of my heart, and Hammersley believe it guided by compulsion. To gratify my bosom’s lord, I am content to bear the odium of imputed vanity, that could believe the gay and sportive Hammersley reflected even for a moment on love and wedded happiness, whose joyous boyhood, like the spangled butterfly, frolics from flower to flower, and flutters in the sunbeam, careless of what to-morrow may bring forth. His festive heart would smile at my unsought dismissal.—‘Oh, vanity!’ he would gaily say, ‘how supreme thou art in every female heart!’ or vanity-plumed himself, he might believe I loved the sportive boy, and careless say—‘My lady of Dunbane, the bait thrown out will not lure me into wedlock,’ and boast and laugh, and hold



me up to scorn—boast how he could deceive the guardian watchfulness of my lord Ellesmere, only he was not yet disposed to play the fool and marry. His idolizing friends would shun, despise, and scorn my vanity and presumption, while my aunt Heatherly and my gentle cousin, your wife, shocked and offended by such conduct in me, and the effects it must produce on the friends of Mr. Hammersley, will leave me to my fate, and join their Irish friends, to shun, despise, and scorn the luckless Frances; for what cause can I allege for such ungrateful, such assuming, worthless inconsistency of conduct? Yet all this I am willing to endure to give my bosom's lord contentment."

The song of the syren once more prevailed; the blandishments of the signora and her daughter once more succeeded to sooth the jealous frenzied mind of the infatuated earl into the calm security of fond reciprocal affection, and the youthful duchess, as she fondly hung on his enamoured

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ed bosom, breathed the softest vows of love and constancy.

The dismissal of Hammersley was relinquished, and lord Ellesmere confessed his maddening jealousy had obscured his better judgment, and reason fled the throne usurped by wildering passion—“Oh, Frances! great is your power! be merciful—be faithful, and mould me to your wishes.”

Lord Ellesmere now said their long absence would be remarked—“My Louisa sent me hither to apologize for the unwarrantable rudeness of my conduct to you, dearest Frances; come then, thou loveliest of the lovely! and speak peace to the bosom of the guileless—the unsuspecting countess;” and linked in love’s soft harmony, this precious trio proceeded to seek the artless and easily-deceived lady Ellesmere.

“Merciful Heaven!” said the marquis, as he clasped his hand with fearful agony, “is all this dreadful scene reality?”

The cold dew gathered on his forehead, and doctor Clements, apprehensive of his fainting, supported his lordship into the theatre, and opened a window to give him air, while lord Dunleer bathed his hands and temples with aromatic vinegar.

“ I thought you more lion-hearted, Heatherly,” said his lordship ; “ but I find you new to the world, and new to guilt.”

“ Thank Heaven,” said the marquis, as he respired more freely, “ this viper is an alien to our blood : Frances of Dunbane is no relative of mine—of the artless, the innocent lady Ellesmere. What a fiend of darkness is her mother !”

The marquis and doctor Clements went with lord Dunleer to Lucan, and Heatherly confessed a violent headache to account for his altered and abstracted manner to Flora and his cousin.

After dinner, doctor Clements mentioned the absolute necessity of sending Hammersley from the vicinity of lord Ellesmere—“ To-day the dauntless spirit of his  
father

father sparkled in his eyes, and he was the bravest of the brave. It required all the well-known power of sir Arthur O'Dwyer over the mind of his young relative to draw him peaceably away, and make him accept the ungracious apology of lord Ellesmere. Endeared to all our hearts by his virtues and his graces, Frank Hammersley must not be left to fall a victim to his own mistaken notions in this instance of honour."

"Would your uncle, my lord Coldbrook, esteem me intrusive, marquis," said lord Dunleer, "if I requested him to take charge of this young Hotspur for a few weeks?"

"Surely, my lord, you do not mean to mock the relatives of Rosabel by such a question. Intrusive! no, my lord; with pride—with gratified pride, my uncle would accept the precious trust that Henry would greet him with, the affectionate welcome of a much-loved brother; and Mr. Hammersley would meet, at

Lewellyn Castle, the chosen friend of my heart—all that is excellent in man—major Packenham.”

A smile, brilliant and bright, sparkled over the features of lord Dunleer, as he asked if major Packenham was a relation?

“ No, my lord, but endeared to our affections almost beyond the ties of kindred blood;” and the marquis, above disguise, confessed his youthful errors, and the steady friendship of major Packenham, which had restored him to his family and to happiness.

A bright and brilliant smile again illumined the countenance of lord Dunleer, as his lordship remarked, with evident emotion, the friend so nobly eulogized could scarcely equal in every honourable feeling the noble eulogist.

“ Marquis of Heatherly,” said the agitated earl, “ I daily witness a brightening shade of perfection in your character unwitnessed before, and I now rejoice in a disappointment which has secured such unexpected

unexpected pleasure to my heart. 'Whatever is, is right,' yet I madly dared to believe it otherwise."

The next moment a deepening blush, which suffused the countenance of lord Dunleer, proved he had been thinking unconsciously aloud.

"Seek not—search not," said doctor Clements, softly, as he took the hand of the astonished marquis; "affect not to observe this lapse of memory in the good earl; all shall be well and happily explained. The question is, my lord, at present," continued the doctor, in his usual manner, "will Hammersley consent to make this visit to lord Coldbrook, for, Hotspur-like, he may fancy to will it otherwise; he will not refuse my request. Though one of his guardians, I never yet attempted to command him: this high-mettled racer must be gently reined and gently guided. I shall trouble you, marquis, to write a letter of introduction to your uncle for Hammersley, and I will write to his lordship.

K. 5

ship, before I sleep, to request he will take charge of this petted boy till lady Rosabel is of age. And now, my lord marquis, this weighty affair completely arranged, what is your opinion of our lovely friends, the signora and her daughter? My opinion is, my lord, that the bosom of a fiend may be clothed with the form of angel brightness, and I shudder as I reflect on this monster of depravity, and call it woman. May I ask, my lord, if the drawing of the stiletto was sent to this country by your direction?"

"It was. By an intervention of Providence, chance I will not call it, were we guided to hear the confession of signora da Cortina; the same guiding hand brought to this country the only being that could prove the signora the owner of the stiletto, and prove the murder of count D'Avèyro; but as this witness is an ecclesiastic, and conscientious almost to a fault, he wished to see a coloured drawing of this weapon before we proceeded further. I wrote to  
the

the duke of Dunbane, requesting he would send the required drawing to lord Ellesmere, to which I affixed no signature, but my letter bore the stamp of truth so firmly, his grace could not believe it an idle tale. The duke gave implicit faith, and followed my directions exactly, though equally ignorant of the accuser and the accused.

“The duke’s letter came by express to the very hour I had mentioned, for I wished to witness the effect it would have on the signora da Cortina. You, marquis, also witnessed her public conduct, her private opinion; for doctor Clements and I both agreed it would be unfair, almost dishonourable, to keep our secret proceedings, in this instance, any longer concealed from you, whom we appreciate so highly.

“The method by which we became acquainted with every horrid secret of the signora’s heart, was never intended for its present purpose; yet how often do we behold, by the most simple seeming means the deeds of midnight darkness, rapine,



and murder, blazed forth to the glaring light of day! When our little theatre was first made, there was no private staircase; we dressed in the apartments beneath, and went into the theatre by a door behind the scenes. Hammersley has really some theatrical merit, and was fond of displaying his abilities in Ruggantino, but found it very inconvenient to keep running about the house, as he called it, to change his dress. Last summer, when he got us fairly settled at Lucan, the ingenious Frank contrived that trap-door which you saw to-day in what was then his own dressing-room; pulled down, it formed a very secure platform, of three feet square, to stand on; and a similar trap-door was made in the flooring of the theatre behind the scenes, and this pulled down in such a manner as to assist the young adventurer into the theatre with ease and safety, and a ladder of ropes, securely fastened to the floor, enabled the young mechanist to change his dress with greater speed and convenience; but his aunt, and  
his

his sisters, and his cousins, raised such an outcry, that to escape the wordy torrent of doubts and terrors, I had the trap-door in the theatre nailed up, and the private staircase made, and the Miss Hammersleys secured the aperture in Frank's dressing-room from being opened, by placing over it a very beautiful flower-piece painted by themselves.

“ When these fair ladies made their appearance in Ireland, we were well acquainted with the character of signora da Cortina, as being as mercenary as infamous. We were aware of the bribe which allured the infatuated earl of Ellesmere into the breach of faith and every honourable feeling—with the marriage of lady Rosabel, and the high-spirited honourable conduct of her cousin Heatherly. No family secret was concealed from our penetration, and hitherto our plans for securing the peace of the gentle Rosabel have succeeded to our utmost wishes. But Hammersley, a young and wealthy heir, we determined to

to keep far from the artful wiles of wanton beauty, and the good-humoured Frank consented either to remain with me at Lucan, or at Ballinderry Tower, the seat of his near kinsman the marquis—‘Wisest, discreetest, best,’ said the sportive boy, with one of his very best tragedy-flourishes, ‘have always been your counsels, my dearly-beloved guardian, and I have just good sense enough to feel and be grateful for all your kindness; dispose of me as you please; I am your lordship’s most dutiful and obedient ward, as in duty bound;’ and the frolicsome Frank brogged it away like sir Arthur O’Dwyer, whom he often mimics, though he loves him like his own soul.

“Sir Arthur had been making fine speeches and uncouth love for some time to the signora, who received his attention with such modest sweetness, that we thought the deceiver completely deceived, and our task not only light but pleasant, when one morning I saw Hammersley dashing

dashing up the avenue, his face pale as death, and so horrified in the expression, that I anticipated some dreadful intelligence. Sir Arthur ran to meet him, for, spell-bound with terror and alarm, a sickening weakness shivered over me, and I felt unequal to move.—‘Do not look so sick and so frightened like, cousin, my lord Dunleer,’ said the good-natured baronet; ‘my young cousin Frank is all in a quandary too about nothing at all, to my mind, seeing that saying and doing are two things, cousin Frank; and when I am married to the signora, she may poison me, that’s all.’—‘The Jezebel—the infernal,’ cried the greatly-agitated Frank, ‘she may poison you for not marrying her, my cousin.’

“Sir Arthur O’Dwyer and I rejoiced to see the sportive smile return, though faintly, to his lip. Hammersley, though he consented to avoid the society of signora da Cortina and the beautiful Frances, felt a resistless curiosity, not to be conquered, to behold these fascinating strangers, so celebrated  
by

by all his acquaintance for their elegance and beauty, and the inventive mind of our young relative contrived a mode to gratify this restless wish, without displeasing his friends.

“Having ascertained the dressing-room now occupied by the young duchess was formerly his own, one morning, when he believed the fair ladies were engaged with sir Arthur, he went through the theatre to the private staircase in lord Ellesmere’s house, and drawing down the trap-door, which formed a commodious seat, the gay and thoughtless Frank commenced, with great ingenuity, scooping a peep-hole in the flower-piece where he knew it would not be discovered; but the progress of his work was suddenly stopped; his hand became powerless as he heard the name of sir Arthur associated with poison and death.

“Once presented at court as lady O’Dwyer, the signora was determined not long to wear the blush of shame on her polished

polished cheek, caused by the uncouth manners, the vulgar phraseology, of her husband. The signora always carried in her bosom a precious drug, which gave to death all the appearance of apoplexy.— ‘I have already,’ continued the Italian, ‘proved its efficacy on count D’Aveyro; and the most eminent physicians in Madrid were not sufficiently skilful to find out he died by poison.’

“The ladies now left the apartment, and Frank rode post to Lucan, with all the horror of his heart pictured on his countenance. With some difficulty we prevailed on our kinsman to conceal this horrid secret, till we could prove who count D’Aveyro was, and his murder on this abominable woman; and we attended for some months with great diligence at the trap-door, without being able to ascertain any certain intelligence of this murdered nobleman; but this watchfulness enabled us to prevent many premeditated heart-aches

aches both to your lordship and lady Rosabel.

“ At length the love-sick duchess became weary of Orlington, heart-weary of lord Ellesmere, and her thoughts were solely occupied by the absent Henry; and, assisted by her mother, determined to enforce the marriage of lady Rosabel.

“ At this period lord Ellesmere had, in his own opinion, no rival near the throne. Infatuated man! he believed the heart of the youthful Frances all his own—her wishes were his will, and her success not for a moment doubted.

“ Hammersley volunteered to amuse the mind of the young duchess, and make love with equal ardour and equal success as sir Arthur, and flourishing away with tragedy rant, declared, not only lords Orlington and Ellesmere, but the peerless Henry, as her grace always called lord Fitzauburne, should yield the palm of victory to his superior attractions.

“ I must acknowledge my unwillingness  
to

to hazard the introduction of this ardent boy to these witching syrens ; his quick penetration saw I wished to play off this wild fancy from his mind.—‘ My lord Dunleer,’ and he addressed me with a solemnity never witnessed in him before, ‘ you assisted to form my principles ; I am grieved to perceive your lordship doubts the work of your own masterly hand ; and if I must confess the truth, I must—I bear a charmed heart, into which the wiles of wanton beauty can never enter. Lady Honoria O’Dwyer has conquered the citadel of that heart, and honour guards the portal ; while I speak of love in faithless guise to the Ephesian widow, Honoria will be only present to my heart. The marquis of Ballinderry has sanctioned my presumptuous love ; and now, my lord Dunleer, with a heart so charmed, can I fear the power of venal beauty, if I could indeed forget that guilt and murder were the inmates of each snowy bosom ?’

“ With heartfelt satisfaction we heard  
this



this confession of the youthful lover ; and his success with the duchess was even beyond our most sanguine expectations.

“ Though you may esteem it an unnecessary digression, marquis, yet I cannot pass over the conduct of sir Arthur O'Dwyer on this occasion. He went the next morning to his friend Mr. Gordon, the barrister, to inquire if any part of the Ballinderry estate could be alienated from the title? Too firmly entailed, it could not be ; but the timber, of which there is a great quantity on the northern estates of the marquis, sir Arthur insisted should be immediately cut down, to increase the portion of lady Honoria.—‘ We will plant young trees in their place, my lord marquis ; they will be quite old enough to portion off the daughters of my son. My own daughters shall never have reason to call their father a careless guardian of their happiness or their fortune ; and that is what I call ‘ reckoning your chickens before they are hatched,’ cousin, my lord Ballinderry.

Ballinderry. And now every thing being settled quite agreeable to my mind, my lord marquis, I hope you wont be disagreeable, and refuse letting the timber be cut down, seeing I want to make a present to my young eousin Frank, at your lordship's expence.' Though the baronet was perfectly convinced that not a single tree could be removed without his permission — 'It is only what I might expect from sir Arthur O'Dwyer,' said the truly-grateful marquis; "if there were ten thousand of our family, the heart, the actions of sir Arthur would still be superior to us all.'

"The opera, which was delayed as long as it decently could, without causing suspicion, was at length fixed for representation. It was downright amusing to witness the anxiety of signora da Cortina about her appearance in Lucinda; her regret that she could not blaze forth the very sovereign of the diamond mine to the assembled friends of sir Arthur—that  
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the simple costume usually worn in this character, admitted not this vast display of greatness; and Frank Hammersley declared, ‘ ’twas pitiful, ’twas wondrous pitiful,’ but it must be so.

“ While these thoughts were passing in the mind of the signora, sir Arthur happened to remark an emerald necklace, which she wore, as the most beautiful ornament he had ever seen, the most perfect contrast to her bosom of snow.

“ A look of vexation passed over the countenance of the Italian, and the ever-watchful Hammersley determined to find out the cause.

“ The two make-believe lovers, as the baronet always called himself and the light-hearted Frank, went with me into the theatre, to fix on some necessary decorations for the viceregal box; Hammersley left us to ascertain the cause of that cloud, the first he had ever seen to obscure the sunshine of the signora’s beauty.

“ The next moment he returned, and  
laid

laid fast hold on the baronet. Hammer-sley was nearly breathless with speed and terror; he half sobbed, half stammered out — ‘ They are going to poison the archbishop of Toledo! Now come with me you must, and come with me you shall, as you are the cause of it all, about that Jezebel’s emerald necklace; surely, my own dear cousin, sir Arthur O’Dwyer, you wont suffer the good St. Anselmo to be poisoned by that first-born of Beelzebub, to get at some emerald ornament? I don’t know well what she said, but she spoke of the archbishop and emeralds, and poison and plunder will follow of course. How the devil, if he did not assist his own, did she make out the good old man was here, or that he had fine emeralds?’

“ Surprised into what he detested, as sir Arthur termed it an eaves-dropping, for all our art could not prevail on the baronet to witness any of their secret conversations, we all hurried to the scene of general information.—‘ I cannot conceive, signora,’

signora,' said the soft-toned Frances, ' why you should hesitate to take the emerald out of that old-fashioned ring, to replace the one so unaccountably lost out of your emerald wreath, it matches so exactly in size, shape, and colour ; the wreath or coronet cannot be worn without it, and you might not be able to match it in this country before the first of May. It will be a compliment to sir Arthur to wear the ornaments he praised ; you can wear them with great propriety in Lucinda, and loveliest of the lovely you look in the emerald green.'—' Still I would not wish to part with this ring, Antoniette ; I should like to produce it, as a family relic, to the friends of sir Arthur ; and some of them, *par hazard*, might understand Spanish, or make out them that did, to translate what is written on the inside, " the gift of Antonio St. Carlos to the deeply-injured Rosalie des Tormes ;" and then your invention would be racked, and no credence after all, perhaps, be given to the story ; the deeply-injured

injured Rosalie might be tortured into a thousand forms, and what you wished to beautify your history, might mar it with a blemish.'—'To your Antoniette, my mother, this ring is valueless. The archbishop of Toledo is doubtless numbered with the dead; or, was he now alive, the powerful prelate, in his grand pallacio, as when you received from him this ring, would I, the acknowledged daughter of sir Charles Selwyn, of honourable birth and noble family, confess myself to be the spurious offspring of his deceitful nephew, don Juan St. Carlos? No, *mamma mio*, no! destroy the ring, memento of little worth and worthless man! Had the stiletto of Robert Bruce bore no inscription, how many pangs the heart of your Antoniette had been spared!'—'Foolish, foolish girl! how often must I repeat, who can prove that Eugenia da Cortina ever beheld the stiletto of Robert Bruce—much less attempt to prove she was the Robert Bruce herself? Cheer up and smile,

my beauteous lily, fairest lilies not so fair, and I will disrobe this emerald gem of its tell-tale covering, and wear it on my brow, and softly say, to that epitome of vulgar absurdity, uncouth gallantry, and obsolete grimace—"To win your favour, I wear the emerald green;" and sir Arthur will believe, and hug his chains, and caper, like an overgrown baboon, to his own hideous chattering. When sir Arthur remarked my necklace this morning, I felt real vexation, that my beautiful and becoming emerald wreath could not be worn, the loss of the centre gem had so totally deranged the beauty of its appearance. I will accede to your wishes, my Antoniette; the setting, carefully removed, can be replaced at any time.'—"Oh, burn, destroy it, *ma belle mere!* that no trace may be left of Rosalie des Tormes! Had the stiletto been destroyed, no vestige had remained of Robert Bruce; a weapon unadorned had been as faithful to its duty. Sir Arthur will best inform you where the wreath

wreath can be repaired, as I am most anxious to keep the ring from the prying eyes of lord Ellesmere, who grows every day more suspicious and more detestable. Take my advice, dearest signora; tell the baronet the ring belonged to signor da Cortina, but how he became possessed of it, you know not; and be anxious only about the setting, to destroy it.'

"The application was accordingly made to sir Arthur, and he promised to bring a jeweller the next morning, to take the orders of signora da Cortina, which would be executed with fidelity and dispatch.

"James Ryan, foster-brother to the baronet, owned a good shop in Capel-street, and sir Arthur promised to be answerable for every gem in the costly circlet. The ring, and strict directions to preserve and return the setting, were given the next morning to Mr. Ryan; and as no comment was made on the part of sir Arthur, no explanation was required.



“ Ryan had in his possession an old-fashioned seal ring, the setting of which was exactly similar to that of the archbishop of Toledo’s; and, without attempting to investigate the motives of his patron, he followed his directions exactly; and sir Arthur was well convinced this man’s secrecy could be relied on. His original trade was that of an engraver, but his own good conduct, and the patronage of sir Arthur’s family, had made him master of a good establishment, as goldsmith and jeweller.

“ By the directions of the baronet, he took the setting off the seal ring, and privately engraved on it a similar inscription to that of the archbishop’s. The emerald was replaced from the warehouse of Mr. Ryan, and sir Arthur retained the ring in his own possession; but we determined no exposure of the dark deeds of the signora should take place till after the confinement of lady Rosabel; safely recovered  
from

from her hour of trial, we feel at liberty to act; the gentle girl cannot now be injured by this tale of horror."

"In a conversation we had some time ago, marquis," said doctor Clements, "I mentioned a noble Spaniard, whom sir Arthur O'Dwyer had assisted to escape; it was the archbishop of Toledo. Marked by the satellites of the usurping Joseph, as the firm adherent of his royal master, he would have shared the fate of many who fell a victim to their loyalty; but Heaven decreed it otherwise, and has conducted hither the only being who can prove Robert Bruce was Rosalie des Tormes."

"A fortnight after lady Rosabel became a happy mother. Sir Arthur observed the necessity there was to proceed on the task allotted us to perform; for infidel must be that heart who could believe the discovered assassin of the duke, the deadly destroyer of the count d'Aveyro, and the infant Frances, was indeed a work of chance.

In six weeks lady Rosabel would be of age, and after that period we had no security from the death-spreading hand of the signora da Cortina.

## CHAPTER XI.

### *The Archbishop of Toledo.*

“ WE went, that is, lord Dunleer and I, with sir Arthur O’Dwyer, to the Vale of St. Carlos, as the present abode of the archbishop is called, who wishes to remain unknown, and has taken the name of St. Anselmo, in compliment to sir Arthur. The senor illustrissimo still retains all that vigour of mind, that quick penetration and clear discernment, for which he was so justly celebrated in the court of Madrid; his figure is still erect, and he possesses an uncommon

common share of activity and health for his time of life, for the venerable prelate is now near seventy.

- “ We were received with his usual kind urbanity, and as he pressed the hand of sir Arthur, with ardent friendship, the eyes of the *illustrissimo* rested on the emerald ring he wore.—‘ Friend of my bitterest hour of trial,’ said the archbishop, as his altered features assumed the cadaverous hue of death, ‘ where did you obtain that ring? has the song of the syren met your ears? has the tempter had power to seek and find your honourable heart? but no, it cannot be! the idle dream of age has warped my senses; infamy and years must have long since destroyed that beauty, once so perfect, which clothed with seraph brightness a heart which demons might admire, and call their kindred spirit of hell! Oh say, my valued friend, where you obtained that ring? it cannot, oh no, it cannot be from the blood-stained hand of Rosalie des Tormes!’—‘ I got the ring, *illustrissimo*,
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trissimo,' replied the baronet, with great command of feature, 'from a very lovely lady, a foreigner, signora da Cortina, who is now the fairest beauty of our Irish court; and this lovely lady is quite agreeable to be lady O'Dwyer, senor illustrissimo; and I have brought you her picture to look at, my lord the archbishop.' And the baronet produced a highly-finished likeness of the signora, secretly painted by himself.

"The benevolent smile of the archbishop was instantly changed into an expression of horror I never yet saw equalled. The portrait dropped from his palsied hands, his limbs stiffened, and his glazed eyes seemed ready to burst from their sockets.—'Father of Mercies!' he at length exclaimed, with renovated energy, 'I thank thee that thou hast enabled thy unworthy servant to preserve this upright man from an union with guilt and murder! But still I may err; Rosalie des Tormes must now have measured full eight-and-thirty years; the portrait is that of a youthful

youthful beauty; it may be her daughter, and, oh, how soothing the reflection, the daughter of my nephew may be innocent! — ‘The signora, senor illustrissimo, must be the age you mention. She has educated the daughter of sir Charles Selwyn, who is now a widow, in her twentieth year, and scarcely more juvenile in her look and manner than the signora da Cortina.’ — ‘My kind friends,’ said the archbishop, gently, ‘will condescend to pardon the imbecility of age, which seeks repose after the violent shock I have received. Allow me to entreat your presence here to-morrow; I shall then be more enabled to state this tale of horror, of twofold murder: meanwhile I will commune with my own heart, and seek in prayer the assistance of Him from whom no secrets are hid; and if it should be our allotted task to bring these deeds of darkness into light, obedience is our duty.’

“The next morning the archbishop received sir Arthur and his friends with dignified

nified composure. The illustrissimo repeated his first meeting with Rosalie des Tormes, as the signora had already done to her daughter.—‘ My heart bled for this meek, innocent, this passing lovely sufferer; —and I execrated my hitherto favourite and well-beloved nephew, as a monster of depravity and deception. About a year previous to the period I have mentioned, a young Scottish nobleman was introduced at the pallacio, whose beauty was acknowledged, whose virtues and whose graces were admired by all who ever saw or knew him. He had with him an orphan boy, beyond expression beautiful, named by the Scottish marquis as his cousin; he was a bold and wanton imp, daring and fearless. One morning I crossed the courtyard of the pallacio, and saw this Robert Bruce baying a mastiff into anger, whom chance had conducted thither; his baby hand held a stiletto high upraised, with singular bravado, for his soft, almost infantine appearance. The mastiff growled,

ed,

ed, yet covered beneath the braggart boy. I ordered the dog to be called off, and took the deadly plaything from young Robert's hand, and marked it well; a prince's son might wear the splendid weapon; 'Robert Bruce' was formed in rubies on the ivory hilt, embossed with flowers, composed of every rich and varied gem. I gave the jewelled weapon to his cousin's hand, and gently hinted, that a boy so young might injure others or himself with such a deadly toy. But Robert sulked, and wept, and hung upon the bosom of his cousin. The marquis kissed his polished brow, and gave the weapon back. Faulty or weak in nothing but his fond attachment to this impish boy, the trial of his tears was past his soul's endurance. The next day he left me, teased into compliance by the wily tears of artful Robert. Ten weeks after Rosalie had sailed, a stranger entered the pallacio, and took my hand with all the warmth of friendship; his features were unknown, for sunk was



the brilliant, the soul-speaking eye ; pale, deadly pale, and hollow, was the cheek, where manly beauty revelled with graceful gaiety ; and hollow was the voice of full-toned harmony ; the form, so noble, glowing with all the spring-tide hope of early youth, of health and happiness, was now weak, feeble, and attenuated ; yet this was the cousin of Robert Bruce, reduced to all but death by his murderous hand. My heart wept tears of blood, as I heard the sad recital, as I witnessed the deep humility of this patient sufferer.—“ My own self-love blinded me into error ; I should have remembered that she who could deceive, with such complete ability, her father and her friends, could only be faithful to her lover while fancy fixed him in her heart. Yet deem me not a vile seducer, *senor illustrissimo* ; my intention was, when I left you, to proceed to Scotland, and present this idolized Isadora to my family, as my wife, which in that country is a legal marriage. I had some money transactions

actions to settle with my banker at Madrid before I left Spain ; and here I received the deathblow to my happiness." The marquis then mentioned the manner of D'Aveyro's death, and the wild horror which assailed his heart, at the acknowledged principles of Isidora.—“ This infidel, this atheist, this remorseless assassin, I tore from my heart, from my bosom, for ever ! and those only who have felt the delirium of love, as I have done, can appreciate the tortures which wrung that heart to agony, the grief which filled my bosom, as I said, ‘ farewell, for ever !’ Months I wandered, restless and unhappy, weary of existence ; I considered myself a monster of ingratitude ! How had I repaid the boundless love of Isadora ! for me she had forsaken friends, kindred, country—her maiden fame, her maidenly habiliments ; for me she had steeped her hands in blood, had burthened her soul with guilt and murder ! Where was my gratitude

titude for life preserved—my thanks for all this waste of love and happiness? Prisoned in cloistered gloom, the ill-fated Isadora was left to wear away her youthful bloom, her matchless beauty, in joyless monotony, remorse and sorrow the companions of her weary way!—and I, the cause of all, had liberty! but, oh, not happiness! Love, witching sophister, had often whispered, ‘go seek the wretched Isadora, and speak peace and comfort to her heart; over that heart your power is absolute; restore her to virtue, and make the saint triumphant over the sinner!’ Vain, presumptuous man! I mistook the distempered raving of a love-sick mind for the inspirations of piety, and determined to return and reclaim the infidel. I was at this period in Venice, at the festive season of the carnival; my friends, who had vainly endeavoured to banish the settled gloom which oppressed me, forced me, one fatal evening, with them, to the palace of  
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the doge. An hour before I had notified my intention of going to Toledo the next morning to my servants. Soon weary of the splendid scene, the greatness and the great by which I was surrounded at the palace, I privately withdrew, and walked homeward unattended. I heard no step, but I felt the assassin's steel plunge deep into my bosom; and as I fell, a well-known voice breathed in my ear—'Faithless and perjured Edward, Isadora is revenged!' I was found bleeding and senseless by my friends, and it was generally believed in Venice, for some time, that I was dead. When I was sufficiently recovered to bear the fatigue of removal, I was ordered to Lisbon; but the agony of my mind retarded my recovery; for, oh, illustrissimo, the hand which inflicted the blow was dear as the vital blood which followed the merciless, the assassin-stroke of Isadora. As the cold dews of what I believed approaching dissolution wreathed my brow, I felt grateful to the chastising hand

hand which had preserved me even by this bitter trial from a reunion with guilt and murder ; for oh, illustrissimo, how could I answer for that heart where love was so triumphant ? At length I arose from what I had long believed the bed of death, but so changed in mind and form, I felt indeed the gay and happy Edward was no more. Slow was my journey hither, for my strength is easily exhausted. But my soul is preserved from pollution, and I am truly grateful. At the convent of St. Clare I heard that Isadora had escaped with your nephew, don Juan St. Carlos, for the lady Beatrice has made no concealment of the weakness of her husband. This morning don Juan confirmed all I had heard, and acknowledged he had brought Isadora with him in disguise to Venice. Fatal, but salutary, was our meeting." The marquis remained with me many days ; but all our efforts to trace Rosalie des Tormes was unavailing, though nothing was left undone that wealth or power could do. At  
length

length he left me and Europe, unwilling to brave the assassin hand of the infamous Isadora, and fixed his abode in America; and I heard regularly from this most amiable and interesting young man, till the usurping Corsican spread war and desolation over the land, now humbled to the dust himself by that all-powerful Hand which raised him up to scourge the vices of mankind. Within the last four years I have frequently addressed the marquis of North Elgin, but received no answer—I fear he is no more.”

“North Elgin!” repeated the marquis of Heatherly, as a sickening horror stole over his heart, and stamped the hue of death upon his features; “North Elgin is the second title of Dunbane! how horrid! twice assassinated by her hand, the husband of her daughter—how very, very horrid!”

“Still chicken-hearted, Heatherly,” said lord Dunleer; “I thought the conversation

tion of this morning had roused your heart to energy."

"When energy should spring to action; my lord Dunleer, you will not find me wanting; but new to such accumulated guilt and infamy, I must acknowledge myself the child of weak mortality; and confess I shrink with horror from this novel picture of mankind. May I ask, my lord, after such damning proofs, why does this fiend of hell continue to range at large—to plan new murders, perhaps to mark them sure?"

"The archbishop was too ill, for several days after this conversation, to leave his bed; and he requested me, ill as he was, to write to the duke of Dunbane, for a drawing of the stiletto, that no shadow of doubt might remain on his mind. But the illustrissimo still continues weak and languid.

"After I had written to the duke, I thought it might be necessary to have the  
real

real weapon to produce, and I wrote to Mr. Lindsay, of Craig Roslin, in my own name, under the bond of secrecy, to bring the stiletto hither; and requested he would remain with me, at Hubert Castle, under a borrowed name, till his appearance was necessary.

“The venerable prelate will, I trust, be perfectly recovered before the arrival of Mr. Lindsay; and I must employ the intermediate time to get young Frank out of harm's way; his fiery temper, unmeliorated by time, can ill brook the frenzied rudeness of lord Ellesmere; ‘bear and forbear’ is not young Hotspur's motto; and though not prone to anger, he will not easily be braved or bullied.

“The marquis of Ballinderry is so tenacious of human blood, that he esteems the prosecutor and the murderer equally guilty. He quarrelled with the early friend of his youth, for bringing to justice a notorious offender, who not only robbed, but treated his person with such violence,  
that



that he was left for dead. ‘ There is blood on his hands, and there is blood on his head,’ was the constant cry of the marquis; as he avoided him like a rattle-snake; and if Frank Hammersley took an active part against the Italian, farewell for ever to our high-raised hopes of his union with lady Honoria O’Dwyer!

“ It is not my intention that my young kinsman should suspect either of these motives for sending him out of Ireland, for rebel would be written on his brow; but I know he will not refuse my request, as he goes for the express purpose to serve and oblige me; the time will soon be, marquis, when ‘ seek not, search not,’ will no longer sound on your ear through magic influence.”

The blush which this speech had raised on the cheek of the marquis had scarcely subsided, when young Hammersley entered the room.—“ You sit here quite comfortable, my lords and gentleman, prosing away, while sir Arthur and I have been  
waiting,

waiting, as in duty bound, for your appearance in the drawing-room this half-hour. The little girls wont give us any tea till you come, though I have coaxed and scolded my very best."

"You will greatly oblige me, my young cousin Frank," said the earl, "by taking your tea with me here, while our friends join the ladies in the drawing-room. I have a request to make of you in private, which I hope and trust you will not refuse me. You can oblige and serve me most materially."

"When you command, I readiest will obey; nor time nor season mar my meet obedience!" and the light-hearted Frank sported one of his very best tragedy-flourishes, as he placed himself beside the earl of Dunleer.

The smiles of Flora soon banished every sombrous thought from the bosom of the marquis; his gaiety was restored, and rapt in love's Elysium, he scarcely noticed when doctor Clements left the drawing-room  
with

with sir Arthur O'Dwyer. None of the gentlemen appeared again till supper, and lord Heatherly softly told his fair companions, it was the shortest evening he had ever witnessed.

When lady Rosabel and her young friend had retired for the night, lord Dunleer mentioned the intention of his young kinsman to visit Wales, as if it had only been the whim of the present moment, and requested the marquis would give him a letter of introduction to his uncle, lord Coldbrook.

While Hammersley not only appeared gay, but happy at this arrangement of his lordship,—“Wonderful man!” thought the marquis; “every human heart is plastic beneath your moulding hand.”

“And now, my lord Dunleer,” said the baronet, “as my young cousin Frank, who, to my mind, is the very best of all good boys, is quite agreeable to consent to your wishes, as in duty bound, I can speak with comfort and heart's ease about the kindness,  
ness,

ness, the confidence, the condescension, I have met with from my lord lieutenant this day, seeing that his conduct, on this and on every other occasion, is that of a soldier and a gentleman.

“ When I left my lord Ellesmere this morning, after that cross-grained tantrum, in which he raved, poor man ! for all the world like a bedlamite, I received a message from my lord lieutenant to meet him, without loss of time, at the Park. His excellency received me with his usual kindness, but looked, to my mind, like one that had something to say, neither good or agreeable, and that he did not know well where to begin ; so seeing his quandary and puzzlement-like grow more and more every moment, I just asked his excellency if any one had accused me of being a poltroon or a rebel ? and that I would clear my character in the face of day, as in duty bound, with all true loyalty.—  
‘ Loyalty, integrity, and honour, are synonymous with the name of sir Arthur O’Dwyer,’

O'Dwyer,' said my lord lieutenant, as he condescended to press my hand in both his own; 'and to preserve his honourable heart from disgrace, I may perhaps hazard the loss of his good opinion; yet place my interference, I entreat, to the real motive, a wish to serve and save you. From living so long abroad, I had no personal knowledge of signora da Cortina, but reports most unfavourable to her character were at first whispered, but now spoke of so openly, that lady Glenfield must withdraw her countenance and her favour, convinced as I am the signora is no associate for innocence and virtue. With deep anxiety, sir Arthur, I marked your attachment to this most fascinating woman, and wrote to my brother in-law, the duke of W——, to ascertain the real rank, the real character, of this Italian. The duke was making a tour through the Hebrides, and my letter remained at his house, in Berkeley-square, till his return.' The duke immediately replied to my anxious inquiries; this is his letter,

**THE**  
**IRISH NECROMANCER.**

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**A NOVEL.**

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• Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-street, London.

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**THE  
IRISH NECROMANCER;**

**OR,  
DEER PARK.**

**A Novel.**

**IN THREE VOLUMES.**



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**By THOMAS HENRY MARSHAL.**

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Love various minds does variously inspire;  
He stirs in gentle natures gentle fire,  
Like that of incense on the altars laid:  
But raging flames tempestuous souls invade:  
A fire which every windy passion blows,  
With Pride it mounts, and with Revenge it glows.  
DRYDEN.

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**VOL. III.**

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**1821.**





# THE IRISH NECROMANCER.

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## CHAPTER I.

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### *The Wizard Guardian.*

THE light-hearted Hammersley gained daily on the esteem and good opinion of his new associates; his merry heart was a continual feast; tempered by feeling and good sense, his gaiety was never obtrusive. The firm belief of O'Dowd in necromancy was a constant source of amusement to the frolicsome Frank; and while lord Fitzauburne and the major were frequently employed in confidential conversations, he lured from the artless O'Dowd his tales of the conjurer.

“ Ever since the death of his parents, major Packenham and I have been ordered and drove about by this cross-grained old Beelzebub; for my own part, I have received all sorts of ill-treatment at his hands;” and O’Dowd recapitulated, with great vexation of spirit, the maltreatment he had received, previous to his being allowed to follow the first friend of his heart to Lewellyn Castle.

“ Perhaps the major was about to make an improper alliance—an unequal marriage; and it was kindly intended by the friendly wizard to prevent his acting unwisely?”

“ No such thing, Mr. Hammersley; major Packenham never acted unwisely, and least of all in love; though, I must acknowledge, had his beauteous Rosa been unblest by fortune; instead of a wealthy heiress, the daughter of a noble laird, his honourable heart would have been equally faithful to this his first affection; and I would proudly challenge all Scotland to  
produce

produce two youthful beauties more lovely than Miss Rosa and her cousin Mabel; you must excuse my not telling their name, Mr. Hammersley, for they have both the same, as my lord the wizard has issued forth his orders to keep it secret, and I have no wish to return to his infernal embraces by disobeying him."

"Is it any harm to ask, my good fellow, how you became acquainted with these paragons of perfection? that wont offend his infernalship, I suppose."

"I can feel no possible objection, Mr. Hammersley; only it is a long story, and you may grow tired before it is half over."

Hammersley entreated O'Dowd would commence the narrative of his life and adventures; and the guileless-hearted Hugh, 'nothing loth,' obeyed the sportive mandate.

"We were hurried away from Pakenham Hall, that is, the major and I, to Scotland, for education, and placed with a clergyman, who had ten children of his

own, and he always took two boarders, who paid liberally, to enable him to maintain them; and I was paid for as liberally as master Packenham, though reared by the bounty of his father; and good parson James, as I will now call him, always insisted I was an orphaned relative of the late Mr. Packenham; but such a wild conceit as that, Mr. Hammersley, I never was sufficiently presumptuous to believe. Nine of the children were sturdy boys—one only girl was the delight of her parents, and the lily of the valley was not fairer than the bonny Mabel, as her brothers fondly called her. When I went to the parsonage I was only ten years old, Mabel was four years younger, and I soon loved Mabel with affection beyond a brother's love, and bonny Mabel loved me better than her brothers. Master Packenham, as he was then called, dined at the table with the parson, and his lady, I suppose I ought to call her; for the truth is, poor woman, she was more like a servant  
of

of all work, for her income was small, and her family large; and a most notable housewife was good Mrs. James. I always had charge of Miss Mabel at dinner, for I dined at a side-table with all the children, and I was loved and kindly treated by all; and I loved them all in return, in my very heart's core. Philip remained to attend his young master, and though I had no pretensions to equality at any time with major Pakenham, yet Philip always served me with equal care and respect; our wardrobes were arranged with equal care, and we were allowed so much pocket-money, that we clothed the parson's children new and finely every year."

"Oh! hang the clothing and the pocket-money!" exclaimed the impatient Hammersley; "the wizard, the wizard, O'Dowd—I want to hear about the wizard and the beauties."

"If you wont allow me to speak of the new clothes, and the pocket-money, Mr. Hammersley, I do not know well how I

can tell about the first time I heard of the old conjuror."

"Oh! go on, my fine fellow, go on your own way; and I will go against nature, if I *can*, and be patient."

"The first Christmas we were at Burnie Brae, Philip removed all our clothes out of the trunks, to make room for a new set, and the major and I heard, by mere chance, a long discourse between Philip and thrifty Mrs. James about the old ones. — 'My brother, the laird of Strabogie,' said Mrs. James, 'has turned fool in his old days, poor man, and married; so it would be out of all reason, Mr. Philip, to expect the Christmas present he always gave of clothing to our two eldest bairns; so I will purchase, if you please, the cast-aside clothes of your young masters; they will do for the little boys well enough, and the difference atween them and new will help me to make the eldest boys look as they used to do, before their uncle turned fool in his old days, poor man! I have

have been scraping and saving these three years, Mr. Philip, to buy me a silk gown, but it must go now to the boys; for I cannot let them feel, poor things, that they are worse off with their father than their uncle; and I must buy little Mabel a frock—our only wee bit of a lassie cannot be aye left out when rigging is going on; and the parson has got his new suit, honest man, and good and fine they are, and I can do just well enough without new gown or bonnet this Christmas; for a good wife's pride should be in her goodman and her bonny bairns, Mr. Philip; and who has better or bonnier than me? God be thanked?

‘I have more money,’ said the major, ‘than I know well what to do with, and I will get Philip to buy a silk gown and a bonnet for good Mrs. James, which she should be quite as welcome to, if I wanted money for three months to come, instead of having it to throw away as I like;’ and I said I would buy a frock, and a sash, and red shoes,



“ Meanwhile I had contrived to deck out the bonny Mabel with frock, shoes, sash, and bonnet; and the cherry-coloured ribbons still flaunted on the head of Mrs. James, when the parson himself appeared, to seek for his wife and his breakfast. Wonderful looked his countenance, as he exclaimed—‘ Why, Janet, woman, you are dressed out like the queen of the May; and little Mab is a fairy queen in good earnest: how got ye all this grand and costly geer, Janet?’ for master Percy, to try if crimson satin was becoming, had folded it round Mrs. James, in spite of her angry remonstrances—‘ You will make it, master Percy, like a wisp o’ straw; the shopman will not take it back again.’

“ Mrs. James told the whole story to her husband, and he joined chorus against Philip. What a shame it was to allow the children to throw away their money, to make him and his Janet appear sordid, and unworthy of the trust reposed in them! and ended by desiring Philip to  
take

take back all this costly and unsought-for finery to the shopman.

“The countenance of Philip remained all this time as calm and unruffled as the canvas-painted features of the laird of Strabogie that hung over the chimney-piece, decorated too with a smile as settled and as unmeaning.—‘I shall take them back, certainly, to please your reverence,’ he calmly replied; “but the shopman wont take them back, I am very certain, to please me, seeing they are tossed and tumbled a little or so, and not fit for sale; and if I went on an unthankful office to please my young masters, I am quite agreeable to go on a fool’s errand to please your reverence.’

‘What can be done? I cannot afford to pay for all this unwished-for finery;’ and the good parson sighed most piteously, and, almost ready to cry, he drew out his handkerchief, and with it a letter, sealed, and directed to himself. As the good man took it off the ground, he looked

like a ghost; and Mrs. James forgot her anger and her finery, as she started in speechless wonder at her husband and the letter, which he read aloud, scarcely conscious of what he was doing.

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‘CRUSH not the first glow of grateful generosity in the bosoms of your pupils. I applaud and sanction their well-timed present, at the same time I admire and approve the single-hearted and virtuous conduct of you and your most estimable wife. Who I am you may never know; but the most minute actions of your pupils and your own can never be concealed from my observant eye. You shall hear from me soon, through the medium of doctor Singleton, the visible guardian of Percy Pakenham; and I, his secret guardian, greet you with many thanks and good wishes for your kind and steady care of these orphan boys.’

---

‘ Fold

‘Fold all these fine things carefully up, my own Janet,’ said Mr. James, ‘as I hear from my friend, the reverend doctor Singleton. What he sanctions I will not dispute; this good man can have no dealings with the wicked one.’ Then suddenly, as if recollecting himself—‘Do not suppose, my children, that I give any credence to magic or necromancy; the Christian light has long since banished the works of darkness; and witchcraft, with the witch of Endor, has ceased to be. I have been played a very neat, a very well-done friendly trick; but if it is sanctioned by the good doctor Singleton, this frolic must be founded in purity and peace.’

“The next morning master Percy found a letter on his pillow, which gave him a great deal of good advice, and praised his thoughtful kindness to the good Mrs. James; but when parson James went to look for his own letter, to compare the writing, no such thing was to be found; and the next day master Percy’s letter vanished

vanished as neatly as the parson's; and though Mr. James made no comment on all this conjuration, he looked grave and grim till the arrival of the promised letter from doctor Singleton. What it contained we never heard; but the good parson smiled again, and we were all happy: while Mrs. James, as blithe as a lark, commenced flouncing her crimson satin against Christmas-day. Every week master Percy had a letter from his invisible guardian, and every Christmas we had money and orders to clothe the children.

“ At fifteen Mr. Pakenham was sent to college, but returned every evening to the parsonage; and the kind parson did his very best to make me a good scholar.

“ Mr. Pakenham was now seventeen, when, one cold frosty and snowy day, returning from Edinburgh college, he saw a carriage overturned in the road; one servant lay senseless on the ground, and the other was vainly endeavouring to restrain the plunging horses, whose violence threatened

ened to dash the carriage in pieces every moment. I always went to meet Mr. Packenham on his return from college, and we both ran to assist the almost-exhausted young man.—‘Miss Rosa—my master the laird of ——; oh! help, young gentlemen, and save them!’

“Mr. Packenham instantly cut the traces, and set the horses free; then forcing open the carriage-door, with some difficulty he took out a young lady, almost more beautiful than bonny Mabel. She was to all appearance dead, cold and fair as marble. Her youthful preserver ran with her to the parsonage of Burnie Brae, as if he only carried a feather in his arms, he bounded homeward with such speed. I succeeded, with the help of the servant, to get the laird of —— out of the carriage; but to get him to Burnie Brae without more assistance was quite impossible, he was so tall and so large, and quite insensible; his servant was weak and exhausted, from the length of time he had been struggling  
with

with the horses, and poor Miss Rosa had nearly smothered her father, in the way the carriage was overturned; so I sat down beside the laird—put his head into my bosom, and warmed into life just for a moment.—‘My child, my Rosa!’ he exclaimed.

‘Is safe and well at the parsonage of Burnie Brae.’

“Mr. ——— looked up in my face, with such a smile of thankful sweetness, I shall never forget it; but his head fell heavily on my bosom. The laird of ——— had fainted through joy and weakness.

“Mr. Packenham soon returned with Mr. James and the four eldest boys, and we were contriving how to carry the laird of ——— home, when Philip appeared, walking quite leisurely, with the barn-door upon his head.—‘You are always so thoughtful, Mr. Philip,’ said the joyful parson; ‘a close mouth makes a wise head; and your head is worth all our hands at this precious moment, Mr. Philip.’

‘Head

‘Head and hands must go together, or work will not be well done,’ was the calm reply of Philip, as he assisted to place the laird of —— on the door; and then flinging the frost-bitten servant, who lay on the road, like a sack of wheat, on his shoulders, he left us to carry the laird of —— to Burnie Brae.

“Miss Rosa and her father were sufficiently recovered to make their appearance at tea; I took my usual station among the boys, and Miss Mabel James, now thirteen, made tea for us every evening. The laird of —— soon honoured by recollecting me; he walked over, and took my hand: it is not for me to repeat all the praise and grateful thanks of Mr. ——, while I stood blushing and bowing, quite abashed at so much praise for what it was so natural for me to do: he kissed the bonny Mabel, and called her his pretty cousin, and spoke kindly to her brothers, whom he greeted as his kinsmen, for the laird was of the same kindred, clan, and  
name



name of parson James. In Scotland they acknowledge a hundred-and-fiftieth cousin, and a poor relation is no offence to a Scotchman.

“ After tea we left the parlour, to dance, as usual, to the music of old Donald the piper. The ingle nook was well red up by Moggy and Meg, the servants and fifty-sixth cousins of Mrs. James, who always joined in the dance, for the kitchen was our ball-room; and light-hearted and merry, we little thought what was going on in the parlour. Miss Rosa had taken such a fancy to our bonny Mabel, who was just her own age, that the laird of —— proposed to take her with them, and promised to bestow a marriage-portion on his pretty cousin. This proposal was too advantageous to be refused; but I never saw a smile on the face of either Mr. or Mrs. James for three weeks after she left us; and the laird himself took a fancy to the second son, our blithesome Willy; and he told his father, if he was willing to put him, he

he would place William under Mr. Duncan, their own kinsman, who had been an upright and faithful steward for more than forty years in the family—that William should assist the old man while he lived, and, after Duncan's death, the stewardship should be his own, if his conduct merited the trust, and the laird could feel no doubt for his father's son; most kindly he invited Mr. Packenham to his castle, and called him the preserver of his Rosa, his only child; and he again condescended to take my hand, as he called me the preserver of his own, and asked me to come and see my old playmates, William and Mabel, at the castle of ——.

“Sorrowful and sad was our parting, Mr. Hammersley, and the best wishes of our hearts went with the laird and his beautiful Rosa, our blithesome Will, our bonny Mabel. The tide of prosperity flowed smoothly into the parsonage of Burnie Brae, from the day the laird of —— set his prosperous foot among us; the  
young

young wife of old Strabogie died, and the old man sent for the eldest boy to keep him company; but the friends of Mr. James, and every one was the good parson's friend, would not let Sandy leave his father's house, till the heirship of Strabogie was secured to him past recall; and sooner than be disappointed in his whim, the old man came into their terms, and we laughed, and we shouted, and called him Alexander the Great, and the laird of Strabogie.

"The first day we saw the laird of —, Philip seemed inspired with an active energy of mind superior to us all; for his master always insisted he had no more wit than an oyster; he placed the servant he had taken off the road on his own bed; and then rode post to Edinburgh; and brought back with him Mr. Mucklewaine, who was much esteemed as surgeon and apothecary. Mr. — was nearly recovered before his arrival, but Miss Rosa was weak and fainting, and the servant still insensible; he gave

gave the young lady a composing draught, and, as the doctor predicted, his fair patient was quite convalescent in the evening; but the servant was a long time before suspended animation was restored, and Mr. Mucklewaine displayed no trifling exultation at his own superior skill, as the man breathed into life, and recovered his speech and memory. As the laird placed a liberal acknowledgment in his hand for professional services, Mr. Mucklewaine mentioned Rob James, the third boy, and his active humanity about the sick servant; and that, if he had any wish to study the healing art of medicine, he, Mr. Mucklewaine, would take him with a very moderate fee, out of liking for the boy, and respect for his honourable connexions. Mr. — gave no decided answer; and Mr. Mucklewaine, who expected a complimentary speech for the very liberal offer he had made, looked disdainfully on the ample fee which he still held in his hand, muttering, as he left

## THE DECEASED

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gnified as her smile  
elcome, preserver of  
e saved my husband  
our gallant kinsman!  
and, the lady Sabina  
suddenly

suddenly placed a brilliant ring upon my finger. Before I had time to withdraw the hand, unworthy such a costly present — ‘Wear this, my valued young friend, for my sake; and should your hour of deathly danger or bitter trial ever meet you among strangers, oh, may you meet a heart as benevolent, as kindly active, as your own!’

“Mr. Hammersley, I lost all consciousness of self, as I contemplated this noble lady, and felt inspired by knightly courtesy; I dropped on one knee, and pressed her beauteous unreluctant hand with humble fervour to my lips; and the language which flowed from my heart, the lady Sabina was pleased to approve; then taking the arm of Mr. Packenham, they entered the grand saloon together, and Mr. ——— ordered a servant to conduct me to Miss Mabel, James, and her brother.

“The bonny Mabel looked even more beautiful than when we parted; and I thought her then the loveliest of the lovely:  
dressed

dressed as richly as her wealthy cousin, her hair and bosom were adorned with costly pearls, but still she was the bonny Mabel of Burnie Brae, for her heart and her welcome were the same. We dined with Mr. Duncan, the pleasant old steward, and were waited on at dinner by a servant in rich livery; and it brought to my mind old times and Packenham Hall, when I used to dine with Mr. O'Niell and his beautiful wife, who loved me like their own child, and Philip always used to attend, and carry me in his arms when I was a little child, and Mr. O'Niell often told me I was a destitute orphan, that owed my all of comfort to his master, Mr. Packenham, and it was my duty to repay this weight of obligation by faithful service to his son; that I should never be lured into, or attempt, equality with him who was born my master; and that if we ever went into the field of battle together, that I should cover his heart with my own in the hour of danger; and so I would,



Mr. Hammersley, while one drop of life-blood remained to be shed for his sake."

"O'Dowd, my fine fellow," cried Hammersley, seizing both his hands, "I would give half my estate to secure such a heart so faithfully my own; and it may not be out of all possibility to claim you yet as my relation, when your family is known, as the wizard says your parents are still alive. My Irish-hearted, Irish-named O'Dowd, don't be making up that face to make a fine speech, but go on with your story, my cousin that shall and will be."

"The gratitude you will not allow me to speak, you cannot prevent me to feel, Mr. Hammersley," said O'Dowd, bowing with even increased humility, as he continued his narrative.—"The next evening there was a ball at the castle, and two sets were formed in the grand ball-room; Miss Rosa and Mr. Pakenham danced in one, Miss James, William, and I, in the other; and for three weeks the time passed so happily,  
we

we scarcely thought it so many hours; when, one morning, Mr. Pakenham found a letter on his pillow from the conjurer, filled with all kind of abuse, accusing him with neglecting his studies; but he should find something else to do, than capering round the country like a dancing bear; and concluded by ordering him to join, that very day, the —— regiment of dragoon guards, quartered at Edinburgh, in which he was now a lieutenant; to prove which his commission was enclosed.

“ When I read this letter, Mr. Hammersley, I was really half mad, and told Mr. Pakenham, if I was like him, I would pitch the old conjurer and his letters, and his commission in the —— dragoon guards, to his father, the devil; so I coaxed and persuaded him to send his resignation, and with light and happy hearts we danced away the evening.

“ In the very dead hour of midnight, I heard a voice beside me, like the angry growl of a bear.—‘ So, Mr. O’Dowd,’ it  
c 2 began,

began, ‘ you don’t choose your carpet knight shall remain in the army, but I choose he shall, Hugh Hopeful, esquire; and Percy Pakenham shall not stay at the castle of——; nor you either, my amorous squire.’

‘ And how can you help it, old Beelzebub? for we will not leave it to please you.’

“ He seized me by the ears, Mr. Hammersley, and I really thought he would have pulled my head off.—‘ I will teach you to keep a civil tongue in your head, you young imp, I will; and you shall go where I please, and do what I please,’ and he kept boxing and beating me all the time he was scolding; and I roared fire and murder, and Beelzebub and devils; but the wizard out-roared me, and I thought he’d shake my life out.

“ The outcry thus raised brought not only Mr. Pakenham and Philip, but several of the servants, into the room; my lord the wizard thought proper to ‘ disappear, and they all wanted to persuade me

I was

I was dreaming, or troubled with the night-mare; but I trembled so violently between fear and ill usage, that Philip brought me a glass of cordial, and Mr. Pakenham remained beside me till I fell asleep; but to express my feelings when I awoke the next morning is totally impossible, for old Beelzebub had removed me to his own wizard castle: rolled up in a blanket, I lay on the floor, a bundle of straw for my bed; a hideous demon stared me in the face, which I at first mistook for a real fiend, it was painted with such exquisite art; but unearthly must have been the hand that drew—unearthly the form that sat for the picture; on his countenance ugliness was concentrated to unspeakable hideousness; infernal was the smile—villanous the expression of his distorted features; hoofs, horns, and tail, completed this assemblage of every thing horrible and disgusting. With one gigantic hand he held a fallen wretch, whose agonized features bespoke the tortures he endured;

C 3

dured; the other brandished a whip of flame. My heart sickened at the sight, and, weak and fainting, I turned from the horrid scene—I turned to meet a scene still more horrid: a group of infernals, whose horrid seeming laugh was sufficient to freeze the marrow in my bones, held at unequal distances five-pronged forks of flame, tossing to and fro the bodies of their wretched victims. I gazed till I believed I heard the shout of demoniac triumph, mingled with the shrieks of despair, the screams of tortured agony, and my own echoed through the infernal den, till I became totally unconscious of all around me.

“ When I awoke into life, I found myself in a good bed; all the horrid scenery had vanished; a witch was sitting beside me, bathing my temples with vinegar; masses of black hair fell from beneath her high-crowned hat; and though her face was dingy yellow, she appeared a perfect beauty compared to the horrid, the  
infernal

infernal features I had so lately seen; her petticoat was red, and her jacket was brown—she had a hump on her back, and a ruff round her neck; and though her skin was black and yellow, her countenance and her voice were sweet and soothing.

“ When I was quite recovered, she drew aside the curtain; a breakfast-table was very neatly laid out, and the good-natured witch asked me to take some tea; but I told her I would neither eat nor drink till I saw Mr. Pakenham; and that if I was starved to death, the soul of the old conjurer would get an additional tossing on the five-pronged forks for my sake; that I defied the devil and all his works; and though the wizard had brought his imps all round me, they had no power to singe a single hair of my head; and I began to pray out loud.

‘ Foolish boy,’ said the witch, ‘ old master has no dealings with the wicked one; you saw nothing but pictures, and

I will let you see them when you eat your breakfast;’ but she coaxed and coaxed to no purpose; for eat I would not; that was more than old Beelzebub himself could make me do.

‘Are you quite sure of that?’ growled the conjurer; ‘we will have a trial of skill, squire Hugh; I will teach you to set me at defiance, and put mischief and rebellion into the head of lieutenant Packenham; you good for nothing cur! it would puzzle fifty conjurers to make out which was the most tormenting puppy of the two, the knight or the squire. Mother!’ he roared out, ‘break that muffin into the basin, and pour tea on it—mask eggs and all up together; as he wont eat it properly, he must take it like a hound as he is.’

‘The mess was soon jumbled up.—’ ‘Go on, my lady witch,’ thought I; ‘it is easier said than done to make me eat it.’

‘Will you take your breakfast now?’ roared the conjurer; ‘or I will make you, squire Hugh.’

‘Indeed

‘Indeed I will not!’ roared I; ‘such a mess is only fit food for one of your own imps, old Beelzebub.’

“The door which was opposite the bed instantly opened, and a figure entered, which I never shall forget, if I live to be the age of Methusaleh; his head nearly touched the cieling—his wizard’s cloak, of black and scarlet, swept the ground, and his high-crowned hat was surmounted by a plume of scarlet and black feathers; but his face beggars all description; it was black as jet, furrowed by a thousand wrinkles, and his eyes were so bright and so sparkling, they looked like a blaze of unearthly fire; in his black hands he carried a strange sort of brass kettle, or stew-pan, with two handles, and an iron ladle, three yards long, was placed across it; he laid it on the table, and taking the iron ladle in his black paw, he commenced mixing up the infernal mess, composed of stewed frogs and lizards, and I really believe there were rats and toads in it.



‘ This is a dainty dish ; I hope it is more to your liking than muffin and tea, Mr. O’Dowd ; so gape and swallow this moment ;’ and he thrust a ladleful of this infernal stew close to my lips, and I was afraid to cry out, lest he should throw it down my throat when I opened my mouth.

‘ Oh, my lord,’ cried the good-natured witch, who really began to cry, ‘ do not be too severe on the poor boy ; he will take his own breakfast, I am sure, to please your lordship ; do, my darling boy, take your breakfast.’

“ With a trembling hand she pushed aside the ladle, and taking the china bason from the table, she began to coax and feed me, like a child, with mashed muffin and tea ; and to confess the truth, Mr. Hammersley, I was glad to gape and swallow at a famous rate, delighted to escape the conjurer and his dainty dish.

‘ Mother,’ growled the conjurer, when he saw the last spoonful stuffed down my throat, ‘ give that fellow his clothes, and  
shew

shew him our beautiful paintings, and the castle where he is to remain till Mr. Packenham returns to his duty.'

"The paintings, Mr. Hammersley, I have faintly indeed endeavoured to describe; and the castle was nothing better than an old ruin, where I was alternately beat and threatened into obedience by the old conjurer..

"The fourth morning I found myself in a strange bed, and Mr. Packenham and Philip were anxiously watching beside me; had I been his own brother, my earliest friend could not have pressed me with greater affection to his bosom, and the calm features of Philip for once were ruffled into joy..

"The morning I was taken away, Mr. Packenham received a letter from the conjurer; it accused him of disgracing the memory of his father, and stamping his own name with dishonour; that he should see me no more till he joined his regiment, and not even then without he was humble

and obedient; and the resignation he had sent the day before was torn in pieces, and enclosed in old Beelzebub's abusive letter. When Mr. Pakenham went to seek me, no Hugh was to be found; and Philip could not even guess at what became of me, but advised his master to say he had sent me to Burnie Brae, for the story of the wizard would only make us a laughing-stock at the castle; so Mr. Pakenham left the castle with the best grace he could, regretted by all, joined his regiment with an aching heart, and I was restored, and still continued a boarder at the parsonage.

“ The —— regiment was expected to leave Scotland a few days after the enforced entrance of their new officer; but for once old Beelzebub was out in his reckoning, and in spite of the old conjurer's threats and abuse, we often rode after parade to the castle, and danced away the evening with our beautiful partners: but the route came at last, and captain Pakenham, for his promotion was very rapid, determined  
to

to know his fate at once, and tell his love for Miss Rosa to her father ; and I opened my whole heart to parson James, and he hugged me to his guileless heart, and he said, no lord in the land should be so welcome to his daughter, provided the laird and captain Pakenham were agreeable to our wishes.

“ The laird of — made but one objection, though we knew he had refused many noble offers for his daughter, young as she was. Captain Pakenham must leave the army, and at twenty-one he might claim his promised bride, and our bonny Mabel shall be the wife of my life’s preserver the same day. I might mate them both perhaps more greatly ; but where could I find equal worth ? and lady Sabina was graciously pleased to give her consent ; and we were all too happy for it to last long. I expected nothing less than a visit to some secret dungeon in the wizard’s castle, when the conjurer found out we were betrothed, and that captain Pakenham

enham had consented to leave the army on his coming of age; but I thought, let the year pass lightly or heavily till the captain was of age, it mattered not; when it was past and gone, I could claim my sweet, my bonny bride; yet I must acknowledge, the iron ladle, flourishing in the wizard's black paw, floated before me all the way home, and his castle and his paintings were still fresh in my memory.

“ In threeé days after, we left Scotland. I got off this time much better than I expected; but on captain Pakenham, the most virulent abuse, in the grossest terms, was lavished by the old warlock, who asserted he should not marry a princess till he was three-and-twenty; but he laughed, and said—‘ We will try titles for that, my lord the conjurer;’ but, Mr. Hammersley, he never saw the iron ladle, or his castles, or his painting; or felt the clapper-clawing of his sooty fingers.

“ The regiment was quartered in Devonshire, nearly a mile from Pakenham Hall,

Hall, and the princely-hearted owner gave entertainments, and balls, and concerts, to the neighbouring families; all the rank and fashion in the country crowded to the splendid parties at Pakenham Hall, and, to give the devil his due, the wizard never growled angrily about his dashing away money, which he took good care neither of us should ever want. Many a bright eye rested in admiration on the handsome captain, and many a wise mamma admired the noble mansion; and it was quite amusing, Mr. Hammersley, to see all the manoeuvring that was going forward, and the fine speeches I got on all sides from fathers, and mothers, and Misses, for captain Pakenham forced me to make one in his parties. In his own house he could and would do as he pleased, and during his absence I was lord of Pakenham Hall.

“ The wizard became quite good-humoured and agreeable, and praised his hospitality and good conduct, for no gambling or excess of any kind was to be met  
with

with at Pakenham Hall; and the wizard, now abundant in civility, was pleased to make honourable mention of squire Hugh, as he always called me, and said, ‘I was good enough company for any red-coat in Devonshire;’ but, believe me, Mr. Hammersley, even the unexpected encomiums of the wizard never for a moment could induce me to forget my own subordinate situation.

“In Pakenham Hall, I was reared the orphan object of benevolence—in Pakenham Hall, the paternal advice of Mr. O’Niell sunk deep into my heart, and the precepts of childhood glowed unfaded in my bosom; the promise I made him at parting was not forgotten, that I never would attempt, or be lured into, equality with him who was born my master; for I never would, though it often angered him sadly, sit at the same table with captain Pakenham; and the junior officers, to gratify their captain, were generally my companions at the side-table, where we were served.

served with equal expence and state. Nothing could induce me to be present at a party, but those given at Pakenham Hall, though, as the relation of captain Pakenham, which he always insisted I was, the invitations I received were equally numerous with his own; and colonel Woodville, offended at what he called my ridiculous obstinacy, left me to enjoy my scrupulous folly in solitary peace, and asked me to dine with him at the mess no more."

"Where do you dine now, O'Dowd?" cried Hammersley, with great quickness; "not at the second table, with steward, housekeeper, and butler, I hope?"

"Oh, no, Mr. Hammersley; all alone, like a sovereign prince, with Philip, as usual, to attend me. I often think I was not born to such attendance; yet I have been always accustomed to it, Mr. Hammersley."

"It shall cost me a fall," cried Hammersley, with a look of sparkling intelligence,



gence, " if you don't dine at the same table, on equal terms, with colonels and captains, and even the old wizard himself; and he that would reject your hand in friendship, may he never press the hand of an honest man, or meet the smile of honest worth ! But go on, O'Dowd, my fine fellow, and never mind my tragedyrant, till I realize this promise I now have flourished forth with all the certainty of success."

The cheek of O'Dowd glowed brightly with grateful hope, as he continued his simple story.—" Thus happily passed ten months of the year, I had so much dreaded at the commencement. No sorrow had assailed us, except that captain Pakenham was taken ill on the road, two days after we left Scotland, and was confined four weeks at an inn by a very dangerous fever, and I took ill shortly after, I really believe, through vexation and grief of heart. We both recollect two strange gentlemen, who remained beside us night and

and day; but who they were, we could never find out; one of them, I am certain, was a physician, for many a bitter dose he made me swallow; but he was so kind and so gentle, I could refuse him nothing.

“ At Pakenham Hall every arrangement was made to receive the beautiful bride; but his brother-officers prevailed on major Pakenham not to leave the regiment till he was married; and old Beelzebub wrote him word he would have full time to sell out, for marry he should not till he was twenty-three; his commission was purchased, and he hoped the major had more sense than to throw away so much money by resigning, as he understood he intended to do.—‘ The wizard has right good intelligence,’ said the major, ‘ for I really did intend to resign my commission, not well knowing how I came by it—I was ashamed to ask; but as it has been purchased, I certainly see no reason why I should throw so large a sum away.’

“ It

“ It was just at this time the marquis of Heatherly passed a fortnight at Pakenham Hall; and a few days after he left us, the major went to London, to get his mother's jewels new set, which were very splendid, for Miss Rosa; but the conjurer contrived, for I am sure it was all his doings, to get the regiment ordered off, at a moment's warning, to Jamaica, and the major was obliged to leave the jewels in the bank, instead of the jeweller's, determined to resign his commission, when he could leave the regiment without a shade being cast upon his honour, which his quick sensibility taught him to believe might be the case, if he refused to accompany his regiment on foreign service.

“ We were scarcely landed, when major Pakenham took ill of a fever, then raging in the country, and relapsed so often, that he was sent home on two years leave of absence, which was tantamount to saying he would be never able to return; and we arrived at Pakenham Hall  
just

just twelve months after we had sailed for Jamaica. In six weeks the major was so well recovered from the debility and fever which preyed on his spirits, that he determined to go to Scotland, to claim his promised bride. His colonel, the honourable Mr. Woodville, to whom he had been greatly obliged, requested he would call on his brother in Cumberland, on some family business of great importance. Believing delay would be injurious to the interest of colonel Woodville, the major proceeded to Cumberland as soon as he was able to travel, and here his friendship was renewed with the marquis of Heatherly. He promised his friend to spend a week at Lewellyn Castle; and then, in bold defiance to the wizard's art, we proudly, fondly resolved to seek and claim our bonny brides; but old Beelzebub made good his threats—there was no marriage for major Pakenham till he was twenty-three.

“ Two days after I came here, a letter  
came

“ Yes, indeed, my lady.”

Sir Arthur lowered his voice to a soft whisper, as he addressed the duchess of Dunbane—“ My young cousin Frank sent his best love and kind compliments to you, my lady duchess, and bid me tell you he would be his own master long before a year and a day, and he hoped by that time, my lady duchess, you would have no cross-grained guardian to control your smiles and your tears.” Then hastily walking over to the marchioness and lady Ellesmere, sir Arthur repeated the adieux of Hammersley, and his regret that he could not make them personally ; but he had been obliged to leave Ireland, on affairs of such importance to my lord Dunleer, as would not admit of a moment’s delay ; and the baronet lamented his inability to attend the ladies in the evening to lord Conolly’s, as lord Dunleer had insisted on his dining at Lucan, and remaining with him till the following day —“ And to be agreeable to his lordship,  
I must

I must be very disagreeable to myself, my lady."

"How peculiarly severe," said the signora, her bright eyes dimmed with tears, "to be deprived on the same evening of both! What society can compensate for such a deprivation? The festive scene will cease to charm, even at lord Conolly's, if indeed my heart-rived Frances can assume sufficient control over her feelings, sufficient composure, to appear there." Her grace left the room, sir Arthur in an agony of mind too mighty for concealment, too violent for endurance. "Cruel Hammersley! how could he wound, with such careless ease, the devoted heart he took such anxious pride to win? Who can be true, if Hammersley is false, deceitful, and inconstant?"

This was spoken in a low tone to the baronet, who looked the picture of sorrow and vexation.

"It is very grievous, to be sure, ma'am, but it is all owing to my lord Ellesmere and his disagreeable tantrums, ma'am; and

my lord Dunleer made a contrivance to send young Frank out of harm's way—in a way that he could not refuse seeing. His lordship knew his father's son too well to suppose his lion-hearted courage would be cooled by the abusive tongue of any old grandfather in Christendom; and if the young duchess has real true love for my young cousin Frank, it will be no very hard task to bring him back, ma'am, seeing his heart is in Ireland, in a fair lady's keeping, and we hoped to be married on the very same day, ma'am."

Sir Arthur sighed heavily, pressed the hand of the signora, and then softly said—"I think we can contrive a way to get him back, ma'am, if the young duchess is quite agreeable."

Tears no longer dimmed the eyes of the signora; brilliant and bright, they sparkled with exultation; her wishes were all nearly accomplished; marchioness of Bellinderry, she saw her daughter the bride of Hammersley; they reigned like queens in the  
emerald

emerald isle ; and the signora returned the pressure of sir Arthur's hand with all the trembling hope of well-acted affection, and determined lord Ellesmere should soon cease to threaten and command. With exultation sparkling on every beautiful feature, the signora sought her daughter—" My beauteous lily, raise your drooping head—we have conquered ; Hammersley will soon return ; my rose of beauty, droop no more—you soon will be the bride of Hammersley, and the same hour will make your mother the wife of sir Arthur O'Dwyer."

The beauteous lily raised her head, and heard, with renovated hope, with exultation equal to her mother's, the conversation of sir Arthur. Fitzauburne had long since faded from her mind, and the beautiful Frances was now only anxious for the union of Rosabel and Heatherly, as it would deprive lord Coldbrook of his cherished whim even in perspective, the deer park.



Till sir Arthur had announced his departure, the duchess knew not the power Hammersley held over her heart, though the signora had long ascertained the fact, and unsparing had been her endeavours to bring about his union with her daughter. The fair Frances could no longer deny the truism—her heart had changed—that the highly-gifted Hammersley was lord of her affections. Oh, how supremely passing her first fancied love, and bounding from the deep abyss of sorrow to the carol song of joy! she laughed by turns, and wept, and hung delighted on the bosom of her mother.

Lord Ellesmere made no effort to conceal the delight he experienced at the removal of Hammersley; he exulted in his triumph over youth and beauty, and flattered himself into the belief, that Hammersley and his family felt equal dread of his powerful friends and powerful arm; while the brilliant smiles of Frances convinced his lordship he was indeed her bosom's

som's lord, and the heart of lord Ellesmere glowed with a sensation of happiness unhallowed love had long denied him.

As his lordship accompanied his family to the summer residence of lord Conolly at Merion, near the Black Rock, the signora marked the smile which followed the attentions of lord Ellesmere to her daughter, which affected no concealment. Proud of his supposed triumph over Hammersley, vain of his fancied power over the heart of Frances, he acted all the fond extravagance of a youthful lover, and the dismayed signora beheld the fair fame of her daughter tremble on the brink of ruin, and took the first opportunity to warn the duchess of the threatened danger. By degrees the brilliant smile was seen no more—pensive and sad her late illumined countenance. Sighing heavily, the duchess requested her maternal friend would accompany her to a less crowded apartment—she felt sick and fainting. The alarmed lord Ellesmere presented his arm, with all

the ardent, the devoted attachment of a youthful lover.

“ No, my lord !” and the beautiful Frances spoke with a look of stern determination, though her voice was scarcely audible even to his lordship ; “ the illness you have caused, I feel the air of Scotland can only cure ; approach me again this evening, and we meet no more. My heart may break, my life be sacrificed in the struggle, but my fair fame shall not be blasted to increase your triumph, already too great, over this throbbing heart ; the finger of scorn is ready to mock the wretched Frances—the smile of contempt has already curled the lip of the malignant. Earl of Ellesmere, I can endure no more, even for you ! Again I repeat, approach me not, or we meet no more !”

Awed by the solemnity of her manner into obedience, lord Ellesmere remained, secretly execrating the vanity which, by displaying his triumph, might deprive him of the object of his idolatry ; but agony  
amounted

amounted to torture, as he saw sir Lionel Ogleby, nephew and heir to lord Conolly, with glowing admiration in his look and manner, continue stationary during the remainder of the evening near the love-inspiring duchess, who smiled in happy gaiety at all the lively sallies of the witty baronet, whose form and manners were well suited to win a lady's favour. Rank and fashion grouped round the signora and her daughter, and all seemed to enjoy the holiday of his lordship's absence.

The beam of morning rested on the festive party assembled at lord Conolly's before they thought of separating, and this separation caused a thrill of terror through the bosom of the fair Frances, as she observed the wild gloom which darkened the brow of lord Ellesmere, more heart-appalling when contrasted with the cheerful, the happy countenance of sir Lionel Ogleby, and felt anxious to escape, in the security of her chamber, the withering frowns of the love-frenzied earl.

The next day, lord Conolly came to Merion-square, and with him his nephew, sir Lionel Ogleby. To gratify his uncle, sir Lionel gave up a very lucrative situation in India, and was but two days in Ireland, when the fascinating loveliness of Frances fixed his long-wavering fancy. Lord Ellesmere received this unwelcome visitor with frigid *hauteur*, and the young baronet supposing it the natural manner of his lordship, gave not a second thought to the gloomy earl, but, with all the graceful gaiety of high-bred fashion, commenced a conversation with the ladies. Deeper and deeper darkened the gloom on the brow of lord Ellesmere; but the ebullitions of his rage could scarcely be suppressed, as he heard the unsuspecting countess invite the baronet and his uncle to join their party to the theatre in the evening. It was the commencement of the after-season, and two first-rate singers had arrived from England.

The heart of the signora almost trembled  
for

for the fame of her daughter, as she saw the bubble reputation ready to burst on the lips of lord Ellesmere—as she saw him ready to fulfil the threats he had menaced but three days before; the wide gulph yawned, of blasted fame and ruined happiness, to receive them; and the frenzy-determined eye of lord Ellesmere confirmed the tale of devastation and ruin was about to be disclosed. The signora hastened to lord Ellesmere, who, stationed in a distant part of the room, looked a glowing fiend, watching whom he might destroy, and softly said—“Frances will not go to the theatre this evening; she will not, after this day, my lord, receive the visits of sir Lionel Ogleby. Cruel, cruel lord Ellesmere, to wither the soft rose of beauty, to break the faithful heart that is all your own!”

“See that your promise is fulfilled, signora,” said his lordship, sternly, as he rose to leave the room, “or dread my vengeance.”

The signora, brooding over more deadly vengeance, resumed her seat; her absence had not been observed, sir Lionel Ogleby had so fascinated the attention of the party, as he described the country and the customs of India. The appearance of sir Arthur O'Dwyer rallied back the loves and graces to the smile of signora da Cortina, and his introduction to sir Lionel gave sufficient time to calm her perturbed spirit, which could not rest, till the vengeance she had secretly sworn against lord Ellesmere was accomplished.

Sir Arthur took his station, as usual, near the signora, and sir Lionel continued his conversation, to which the fair Frances listened with the most gratifying attention. Sir Arthur remarked her cheek was pale, her countenance pensive almost to sadness. —“ No wonder, poor child, when her old guardian has banished her smiles and her sweetheart. I wrote to my young cousin Frank when I left you yesterday, ma'am, and I hope he will soon be back, for we  
had

had no pleasure in life among us somehow since he went away ; and I was thinking it would amuse you and the little duchess, if you would come and look at Leixlip Castle to-morrow, ma'am ; it is painted so grand and so gay, and so improved and so altered, all ready to receive a lovely lady, if she will condescend to be the queen of my castle, who has long been the empress of my heart ; and the old furniture must be all changed, for the love and respect I bear this lovely lady, as in duty bound ; and I hope you will be agreeable to give your opinion and directions about the window-curtains, and the carpets, and the chair-covers, and the looking-glasses, and the paintings, for I will have my castle as grand and as gay as the castle of my cousin, lord Dunleer ; and if it is quite agreeable, we will go without having the elders at our heels, ma'am ; not that I mean to call my lady the countess elderly, though she is a grandmamma ; but, to my mind, we would be just as agree-

D. 6

able.



able without them for one day, seeing I am not over fond of my lord Ellesmere's company, since his bad treatment of my young cousin Frank; and I see no reason in life you or I have to please him, or ask his leave about whom we choose to marry, ma'am."

Love, hope, and joy, played in the smile, and danced in the eyebeam, of the beautiful signora, as she replied, with witching sweetness—"We cannot go to-morrow, dear sir Arthur; but on the following morning lord Conolly gives a splendid breakfast-party at Sans Souci Park—appropriate name, for every heart is without care beneath his festive roof. Her grace of Dunbane and I will forego this splendid entertainment, to seek at Leixlip Castle happiness and sir Arthur O'Dwyer."

When lord Conolly and his nephew had made their parting bows, lady Ellesmere regretted the engagement which prevented the pleasant young baronet from being of their party to the theatre in the evening,

evening, and the signora felt she had been premature in addressing lord Ellesmere ; but for her unnecessary caution, he had himself heard the denial of sir Lionel. The open terror she evinced in the threatened hour of danger, the signora justly believed would increase the triumph of his lordship into overbearing power—into slavish control. From that hour the days of lord Ellesmere were numbered.—“ His selfish nature only spared the fair fame of my Antoniette to secure his own, which every gust of jealous passion renders more careless of exposure.” Thus thought the signora da Cortina, as she determined the grave should silence the frenzied babbler for ever, before his threatened vengeance should engulf them in misery profound.

The manners of lord Ellesmere assumed on this evening a haughtiness of control, never witnessed before by the beautiful Frances. He never left her side at the theatre, and his angry brow hurled defiance at every one who approached or attempted

tempted to address the duchess. While proud of his triumph, lord Ellesmere enjoyed the heartache impressed on her pallid features, as with bitter irony his lordship asked, if her visit to Scotland was delayed to gratify the wishes of sir Lionel Ogleby, whose glowing love was reflected on her features in the morning, not wan and weary as they now appeared?—"Change-ling! is the festive smile of Hammersley so soon forgotten—banished by his friends far from your wanton wiles? Nay, start not, lady; I saw your cheek fanned by the breath of wanton dalliance—I saw your head recline upon his bosom, and marked the triumph of his smile, which wrung my heart to agony, to madness; yet he too is forgotten for a newer lover, who sunned your cheek with beauty this very morn, as you gave credence to his garbled nonsense."

Absolute were the commands of his lordship not to appear at the *déjeuné* of lord Conolly—never to smile again on  
sir:

sir Lionel Ogleby. All this was conveyed in so low a voice, with such cautious care, that the countenance of the fair widow only told the discourse of lord Ellesmere was displeasing, and the torture he wished to inflict was increased in proportion as it was meekly endured. The duchess spoke not—smiled not; and the earl, weary at length of her insensibility, ceased to upbraid her, and remained in gloomy silence, disturbed only by jealous watchfulness, till the entertainment was concluded.

## CHAPTER III.

*The Poisoned Cup.*

THE next day no reproach met the ear of lord Ellesmere for his cruel and insulting conduct the preceding evening; but soft and sweetly-conciliating were the manners of the signora and her daughter.—“To win your favour, to prove my love,” said the beauteous Frances, “I will give up the festive party at lord Conolly’s tomorrow, careless of censure or remark, and remain at Hubert Castle with lady Rosabel the entire morning.”

Soothed into security, love’s happy dream again filled the bosom of lord Ellesmere, and humanized his temper into gaiety.

“How very provoking,” said lady Ellesmere,

Ellesmere, fretfully, "that sir Arthur O'Dwyer should fix on the morning of lord Connolly's entertainment, to parade you over his odious old fright of a castle, signora! if he kept patching and painting it till the day of judgment, it is fit for nothing, after all, but owls and jackdaws to live in, and I hope your first act, as lady O'Dwyer, will be to pull down the old monastery-looking castle."

"How strangely you talk, Louisa!" said the marchioness. "Leixlip Castle is a very noble mansion; sir Arthur has expended a very large sum of money on it this summer, and instead of pulling it down, signora, I hope you will give us many pleasant parties in it as lady O'Dwyer."

The next morning lord Ellesmere joined the signora and her daughter at breakfast, and shortly after, the gardener of sir Arthur O'Dwyer brought a curious exotic, a present from his master to the signora, which he would give to no other hand than her own, as he wished to tell the

the lady herself the method of curing, as he called it, this very delicate plant.

As signora da Cortina left the room, lord Ellesmere pressed the cup he had just received from her hand to the lips of the beautiful Frances.—“Taste, dearest Fanny, and nectarize the cup.”

To gratify his lordship, the duchess took nearly a third part of the chocolate, and lord Ellesmere affecting all the gallantry of a youthful lover, swallowed the remainder, gaily saying it was nectar divine, balmed by her honeyed lip.

On the return of the signora, who had received a most flattering billet from sir Arthur, to remind her of the promised visit to his castle, lord Ellesmere hurried them away, evidently anxious they should be on the road to Lucan before the marchioness or lady Ellesmere made their appearance. Sir Arthur met them at the entrance of Leixlip Castle, and drew an arm of each smiling beauty through his own.

They

They entered the grand saloon, in which were the archbishop of Toledo, the lords Dunleer and Heatherly, doctor Clements, Mr. Gordon, and another barrister of eminence, Mr. Ponsaby. The archbishop rose to meet sir Arthur and his fair companions. —“ Rosalie des Tormes !” he exclaimed, in the Spanish language ; “ oh, how little changed ! still perfect in loveliness, though twenty years have passed since last we parted. Is this young beauty your daughter, the daughter of my nephew, don Juan St. Carlos ?”

The cheek of signora da Cortina remained unchanged, unfaded by this address ; a look of softest pity stole over her features, as she gently asked the baronet—“ Is the insanity of this venerable old man harmless ? or is it the dotage, the imbecility of old age that makes him address me by a name strange to me as his own person ?”

“ I am not mad, Rosalie des Tormes,” said the archbishop, with placid dignity, who, though he could not speak the English



lish language, understood it sufficiently to comprehend the meaning of her words; "and if seventy years have combined to unsummer my brow, reason and memory are still unbroken by time. Will it please you more if I address you as Robert Bruce, the well-acted orphan boy, the cousin of Edward marquis of North Elgin? Have you no recollection of this stiletto, which I took from your hand twenty-one years ago in the courtyard of the pallacio?"

"How he raves, poor old man!" said the signora, gently. "At the period he speaks of, I was the happy wife of signor da Cortina, which the certificate of my marriage, now in my cabinet at Merion-square, will prove unquestionably, and with it is the register of my birth, as Eugenia, only daughter of the marchese del Rio. The register of the signor my husband's death is also in my possession; but I am acting like a being devoid of reason," continued the signora, with proud dignity, "by attempting to refute, with proofs  
substantial,

substantial, the airy accusations of a mind diseased. Was I brought hither to be bated into madness by a madman? I have powerful friends, sir Arthur O'Dwyer, and by their power this lunatic shall be removed to an appropriate habitation, nor suffered to range at large, to spread his brain-crazed fantasies around, fancying he knows not what, and knows not why—to sully reputations, or destroy—then laugh with idiot folly, as the bubble bursts of his own making.”

“Have you no recollection of the convent of St. Ursula, from which you escaped with the gay and gallant marquis of North Elgin? Have you no recollection of the doge’s palace at Venice, near which you plunged this stiletto in his side, and left him all but dead? From his own lips I heard the fatal truth. Isadora of Italy, who drugged the deadly goblet for count D’Aveyro at Madrid, speak, and deny these charges if you can?”

The signora stood firm and collected;  
innocence

of her mother.—“Oh, signora, I have been quite sick ever since lord Ellesmere forced me to taste his chocolate.”

These words, spoken with difficulty, were the last the fair Frances ever uttered. Every symptom of apoplexy appeared; the struggle, though violent, was short, and with her last sigh fled for ever the senses of signora da Cortina. Wildly she raved, and dreadful were the imprecations she lavished on all around her. Then suddenly changing, she addressed her daughter—“Why so silent, my Antoniette? Droop not, my beauteous lily! What have we to fear? Ellesmere is silent, and for ever—silent as the infant Frances—silent as D’Aveyro! He cannot mar your hopes, or blast your fame, my rose of beauty!” Then laughing wildly, she exclaimed—“Most potent, grave, and reverend senor the archbishop, I will prove you mad or doting ere we part! Foolish girl, why do you weep? is not every thing arranged to prove me the wife, the widow

widow of signor da Cortina? Poor little girl, she died in the same ship which carried me from Spain. I got possession of her papers—I thought they might be useful when I took her name; the wretched young widow, banished by her family for unequal union, is now my—my spear and shield. Pious Antonio St. Carlos, the deep grave yawns to receive you; thither will I send him, my Antoniette; illustrissimo, most potent, explore from its dark confines, if you can, the regions of bright immortality; beyond it, give me earth and all its joys;" and again she laughed with horrid wildness.

The maniac suddenly changed to pensive sadness.—"Sleep on, my child, and I will sing your lullaby; and I will pluck the freshest roses—the fairest lilies—to compose your pillow; and honeyed dew shall balm your eyelids, my beauteous daughter: my soothing song shall not awake you, dearest;" and the witching harmony of her voice sounded like aerial

music through the apartment, as the signora sung a conventual requiem for the dead.—“Who are you?” she hastily exclaimed, her eyes sparkling with all the wild lustre of insanity, as they rested in steady gaze on Mr. Ponsaby. “Oh, now I know; you are lord William Lindsay. Look not so sternly, William of Dunbane—I only righted bitter wrong when my stiletto drank the life-blood of your brother. False, perjured, faithless Edward, Isadora is revenged.” Then screaming with terrific violence, she exclaimed—“Duke of Dunbane, touch not my child—wake not my Antoniette; she is no longer your bride; the grave has divided you and her for ever: you shall not tear her from me, merciless duke. Oh, North Elgin—oh, once-beloved, once-idolized Edward, spare my child! drag her not with you to the cold damp tomb! she only sleeps, North Elgin. Are you indeed so changed—have you no mercy, Edward? Help! help! and save my child!” and her shrill screams

screams of frenzied agony echoed through the castle, as the signora clasped still closer the clay-cold form of the duchess to her bosom. Violent convulsions shook her frame—nature could sustain the shock no longer. The robe of the duchess was dyed with blood—it flowed over her marbled bosom; the wretched mother had burst a blood-vessel, and her own violence hastened her dissolution. No human aid could save her, and the very superior medical skill of doctor Clements, in both cases, had been tried in vain.

The archbishop, with pious fervour, signed the cross on his forehead and bosom, as he softly exclaimed—“He that is mighty hath gotten himself the victory. Monuments of divine retribution, how are ye fallen?” Yet believing the prayer of the righteous man availeth much, even after death, he ordered daily prayers to be offered up, in his own private chapel at the Vale of St. Carlos, for the spiritual repose of Isadora and her daughter; and when

restored to his country and his rank, this senior illustrissimo still continued his supplications to the throne of mercy for pardon and for peace.

A messenger now arrived at Leixlip Castle, to inform the marquis of Heatherly, that his uncle, lord Ellesmere, had expired suddenly, and lady Ellesmere still continued insensible when he, the messenger of evil tidings, left Merion-square. A heavy fall in the breakfast-room had brought the servants to witness the dying struggle of their lord. Medical aid was called in with ineffectual haste, but human aid was useless—unavailing. At first the physicians had pronounced his death was caused by apoplexy; but doctor P—— observed in one of the breakfast-cups, which had not been removed, a strange-looking fluid, dark dingy yellow; little indeed remained, but sufficient to prove lord Ellesmere had died by poison.

The signora fearing that twenty years might have weakened the efficacy of this  
deadly

deadly powder, had doubly drugged the cup; and lord Ellesmere had so engaged the attention of her daughter, that all had passed unseen, save by that all-seeing eye from whom no secrets are hid, and the crime of this wretched woman became her punishment.

By degrees the horrid story was imparted to the countess, softened indeed in the expression, as far as truth would admit of; and the deeply-afflicted countess acknowledged, with artless sorrow, the blameable weakness of her mind, which had been duped, despite of her better judgment, by the artful blandishments of the Italian, while she drew the veil with light and gentle hand over the failings of her murdered lord; but the marchioness, except in the presence of her daughter, shewed no respect, and little mercy, to the memory of her son-in-law, and endeavoured to veil, with the errors of lord Ellesmere, her own weak impropriety of conduct, to give it no harsher



name, for the favourites of the marchioness of Heatherly were seldom in fault, herself the most favoured, the most faultless of all.

The kind-hearted Flora O'Brien assisted lady Rosabel to sooth the sorrows of her widowed mother; the wounded spirit of lady Ellesmere was consoled by their kindness, and grateful for their unwearied attention. The countess could boast no superior strength of understanding, but her heart was pure and guileless; she raked not the ashes of the dead, but believed them, like the venerable St. Carlos, to be objects of divine retribution, whose crimes had been their punishment. Lady Ellesmere only remembered the virtues of her husband, and the pious widow hoped a life of rectitude would atone for one solitary error—"The song of the syren has beguiled us both; and that man must be more than mortal that could resist its witching sweetness."

Not so the marchioness, who never acknowledged

known or believed herself in error. Lord Ellesmere was stamped, in her opinion, as a vile seducer; and the poisoned cup might have been drugged by his own hand, and her sweetest Frances, her much-loved signora, fallen the victims of his frenzied jealousy. The marchioness sickened of all around her—the soothing voice of adulation was now no more, that hailed her as perfection here on earth; her plans were all deranged—rendered abortive; she had been juggled and deceived by her family, most so by her favourite grandchild. Lord Coldbrook, whom the marchioness never could esteem, because he could not flatter, was every way triumphant; the beautiful grove would be destroyed, to gratify his cherished whim, and the moralizing Henry enjoy the splendid fortune of lady Rosabel; and Heatherly, whom she so anxiously endeavoured to enrich, was about to wed an untitled daughter of poverty, as, in the bitterness of her soul, the marchioness named Flora O'Brien. Though

treated with respect, with the utmost kindness by all, their kindness was received with thankless coldness; the honeyed praise of Frances was now no more; no longer was she adulated beyond mortality by the harmonious, the silver-toned voice of signora da Cortina—fallen from her airy height to mere mortality, the marchioness sickened at the prospect of every one being happy, according to their own ideas of happiness, without her guidance and without her rule, and determined at once to leave a country where she felt humbled, disgusted, and unhappy; and the morning after the interment of her deeply-regretted favourites, the marchioness of Heatherly left Ireland; and though her family felt the unkindness of her ladyship's conduct, their patience was relieved from a heavy burden by her absence.

The body of lord Ellesmere was attended to the family burial-place, in Cumberland, by the marquis of Heatherly, lord Dunleer, sir Arthur O'Dwyer, colonel  
and

and Lucius O'Brien. This unexpected compliment to the memory of her lord sunk deep into the grateful heart of the widowed countess, who wept the thanks she was unequal to express; and as the manner of his death precluded any display of the greatness usual on such occasions, the marquis of Heatherly followed the wise counsels of lord Dunleer, and mourned, without pomp or parade, his errors and his death.

When lady Ellesmere was informed of the marriage of lady Rosabel, she pressed the cherub boy to her bosom with tearful delight.—“Delay not, dearest Rosabel, to impart this blessing to your husband, as yet unknown to his heart—the smiles of his first-born—the glowing throb of paternal love; and may your wedded life be as perfect in happiness as your own spotless purity—as unclouded by evil or by error as the virtues of your husband. Entreat me not, Rosabel—I cannot accompany

you to England; I am well aware my errors will not only be forgiven, but forgotten, by the unerring Henry and his father; but I must have time, my child, to forgive myself—forget I never can. My blessing and my prayers go with you, sweetest Rosa; my presence would but mar your happiness; and if peace is again restored to this lacerated bosom, my first joyful smile shall be shared with Rosa and her husband. My kind friend, Mrs. O'Brien, reading my very wishes, has requested me to remain her guest for some months—how very, very kind! I accept her considerate kindness without scruple, as I already consider myself bound to this amiable and much-esteemed friend by kindred ties; her daughter, the lovely Flora, has secured the heart of him, by every one but you believed unmatched on earth, save by this peerless girl, whom, in my deepest hours of sorrow, I have more than once been tempted to believe a ministering  
angel

angel descended from her native skies, to pour the balm of consolation into the bosom of weak and erring mortality."

## CHAPTER IV.

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The First Day of September.

IMMEDIATELY after the death of lord Ellesmere, young Hammersley left Wales; endeared to every heart at Lewellyn Castle; but O'Dowd could scarcely conceal his sorrow, when the light-hearted Frank pressed his hand with affectionate goodwill.—“Farewell, cousin Hugh,” he sportively said, “I will seize the conjurer’s beard or his books, though I ransack earth, air, and sea, for his abode, till I make him confess our relationship, my gentle coz; and when we meet again, I will be the harbinger of strange, marvellous

strange tidings; and rest on my faith and honour, noble lord, a stranger tongue will tell a stranger tale of wonders when next we meet. Farewell, my friends; forget not the prophetic Hammersley;" and springing into his carriage, he was out of sight the next moment, every one believing, but O'Dowd, all he said to be the wild effusions of his sportive and prolific fancy.

Poor O'Dowd clung to the hope of relationship, and Hammersley with iron grasp that could not be shaken.—“Why should he deceive me? Mr. Hammersley is too good, too kind to amuse himself at my expence, merely to laugh at my folly, when he knows in his heart there is not one in the wide world I would so soon be related to, excepting only my best, my earliest friend, major Pakenham.”

The following morning lord Coldbrook received a letter by post from the secret guardian of major Pakenham, requesting the earl would meet him at Elmwood
Castle

Castle the first of September, on which day his near relationship to Percy Pakenham would be fully proved. The writer earnestly entreated lord Coldbrook would give up his intention of going to Elmwood Castle till the appointed time, as it would deprive his lordship of much unexpected pleasure, and derange the plans of one who had been for thirteen years the faithful guardian of his kinsman. Rosabel and Heatherly would be at Elmwood Castle on this eventful day, and with them two relations lord Coldbrook never saw or heard of, one, if not both of whom would be infinitely more prized, more valued than the highly-favoured young man who had been so long obtruded on the hospitality and kindness of his lordship.

No air of command breathed through this elegantly-worded and finely-written letter; all was winning-soft, kindly-conciliating.—“We must humour my lord the conjurer,” said the smiling earl, “who seems to have changed his nature, and
writes

writes like lady fair, so smooth and civil; but for once, my dear Percy, your friend, the wizard, is mistaken; no new relative he can hocus-pocus hither can ever be more endeared to my affections—more highly valued than yourself.”

On the first day of September, the gates of Elmwood Castle opened to receive their noble owner. As lord Coldbrook ascended the steps of his castle, his head became giddy, and he leaned for support on major Pakenham.—“My lord the conjurer has been here,” said the earl, endeavouring to shake off the weakness which oppressed him. “Harry, do you perceive any alteration—any change in Elmwood Park?”

“Every thing around me seems changed,” replied Fitzauburne, whose changeful colour declared the astonishment he experienced, “and the wishes of my great-grandfather finally accomplished.”

The wall which divided Elmwood Park from the Grove had been taken down;
numerous;

numerous herds of deer, of varied kind and varied beauty, bounded through the extensive range, rich in luxuriant variety of foliage—the Grove House, newly painted and embellished, was railed in with such tasteful elegance, that the most fastidious could not make a fault, or say aught was wanting to ornament the splendid scene, where nature and art so sweetly blended in happy unison. The plan of the late lord Coldbrook had been exactly followed, except where change gave greater effect, to scenic beauty; and the present earl, with unqualified surprise, declared that plan had never been out of his possession since the death of his grandfather.

The wildered steward could give no account how this change was effected; two days before the park wall had suddenly disappeared—strange herds of deer bounded from every corner—every thing bore its present appearance, as if by enchantment—and the humble opinion and firm belief

belief of Mr. Smith was, all was the work of necromancy or magic.

“There is Mr. Hammersley; I’m sure it is him!” exclaimed O’Dowd, who was standing near a window, from which he had a full view of the park; “and that is my lord marquis of Heatherly, walking beside the beautiful young lady with an infant in her arms; but I do not know who that noble gentleman is that steps so grand and so graceful, with a lady leaning on his arm, covered all over with a veil.”

The next moment lord Fitzauburne was seen bounding as swiftly over the park as the light-footed tenant of the shade; delight swelling to rapturous ecstasy, as the first throb of paternal love glowed in his heart, as he pressed his first-born to his bosom, cradled in the arms of the loved and lovely mother.

With friendly zeal major Packenham extenuated the conduct of lord Fitzauburne to his father; related the manner of his

his forced marriage, and his reasons for concealment, that the actions of his father, so duteously beloved, might remain free and unfettered; and with all the glowing energy of truth and nature, the major sketched the kindness, the guardian care, the gentle Rosa had experienced in a land of strangers.—“ Surely, my lord, you will pardon an offence so unpremeditated. Heatherly, the noble-minded Heatherly, is most to blame; and blame him if you can.”

“ Blame him for what? And what have I to pardon?” cried the joy-enfeebled earl. “ Support me, dearest Percy, till I bless my children; for this full tide of happiness flowing over my heart has weakened me to infancy;” and the blessing which flowed from the pure and thankful heart of the good earl, extended with spontaneous effusion over the heads of Heatherly and Pakenham, whom he called, next to his Henry and Rosabel, the children of his soul’s best affection.—“ Pardon me, noble stranger,”

stranger," said the earl, "if I have appeared ungrateful or neglectful; this unexpected blessing, this cherub boy, must plead my apology; welcome, noble stranger, friend of my persecuted Rosabel—of my second Julianna."

Lord Dunleer, for it was him, took the offered hand of lord Coldbrook, and pressed it with emotion to his bosom.—"Surely, surely," said his lordship, "I have seen that face before. Sixteen years have passed away, yet such a countenance, so noble, so varied in expression, could never be forgotten. May I ask, if you and another gentleman, habited in the deepest mourning, attended the funeral of my grandfather at the period I speak of? the grief, the uncommon elegance of both rested for years on my imagination; and the secret mourners of my grandfather I mourned at not being able to trace."

"Have you any recollection, my lord, of our parting conversation?"

"Every word is registered in my heart.

You

You said, if Heaven so willed, in sixteen years we should meet again; and your companion, as he pressed my hand, said I would hear of kindred claims still unknown."

"Have you any recollection, my lord, of your sister, who resided with her aunt, lady Lester, near Clifden?"

"My beauteous Lydia! Never can I forget her; she died in her sixteenth year, when I was in Switzerland with my uncle, the late Mr. Lewellyn; I daily contemplate her picture, placed near that of my long-lost Julianna; I contemplate them with the hope each angel-form is now beautified in heaven."

Lord Dunleer suddenly threw aside the veil which covered the face and form of his companion.

"Lydia Percival! My sister, Lydia Percival!" exclaimed lord Coldbrook, as he sunk fainting on the bosom of his son.

This momentary weakness soon subsided; and as he pressed the perfect image of
of

of his long-regretted sister to his bosom, the heart of the pious earl glowed with thankfulness to Him who had pressed down and overflowed his cup with blessings.—“The daughter of your sister—of Lydia Pakenham, is worthy of your love. Percy, embrace your sister.”

We draw the Grecian painter's veil with regret at the acknowledged want of ability to portray the feelings of Percy Pakenham, as he pressed on the ruby lips of the beauteous Flora O'Brien a brother's fond kiss of love, as he heard himself declared to be the nephew, the acknowledged heir, of the powerful lord Dunleer.

When this tumult of delight had in some degree subsided into joyous contentment, lord Dunleer placed a written paper in the hand of lord Coldbrook, who instantly acknowledged the handwriting of his grandfather.

“I acknowledge Lydia O'Neill Pakenham, wife of Horace O'Niell Pakenham,
to

to be my granddaughter, Lydia Percival, whom I reported as dead ; she, the said Lydia, having incurred my heavy displeasure, by making a Scotch marriage with Horace O'Niell, grandson to the late, and nephew to the present earl of Dunleer, who was then a captain in the —— regiment. The name of Pakenham was taken after his marriage with Lydia Percival, colonel Pakenham, of the aforesaid regiment, having bequeathed him a good estate in Devonshire : and I acknowledge Henry Percival O'Niell Pakenham to be my great-grandson, and all the children of the before-mentioned marriage to be my great-grandchildren."

This paper was regularly signed and sealed by the late eccentric earl, and witnessed by Hubert O'Niell, Lucius O'Niell, and Philip Benson.

" I wanted not this document," said lord Coldbrook, " to prove my affinity to these precious children of my regretted sister ; and I confess a sensation of vanity inexperienced

perienced before, as I see my own image reflected in the features of her son—a sensation only equalled by the pride I feel in acknowledging my nephew, and this charming girl, my niece, surpassing in loveliness her passing lovely mother.”

“ Yet that document, so lightly prized, my lord, cost us a world of trouble to obtain; the tears of Lydia, the prayers of Horace, the threats, for I will confess the fact; the threats of his brother, Hubert O’Niell, now earl of Dunleer. But I may as well commence my story without further preface, for short is the space allowed me. I have invited some of our mutual friends to meet me here to-morrow. I will not apologize, my lord, for asking these visitors to your castle; I know the heart of lord Coldbrook, and have promised my friends heart-cheering welcome; and when you have heard my tale of other times, should your lordship find aught to blame in the conduct of Horace and Lydia Pakenham, or in their brother, Hubert O’Niell,

O'Niell, remember, 'to err is human, to forgive divine;' remember also the errors of early youth are more excusable than those of a hoary-headed grandfather, who for this union, unequal in nothing but wealth, cut off for ever this brightest ornament of her family from her kindred and her friends, and threw her, deserted and friendless, on the faith and honour of him who never betrayed his trust.

“ Hubert and Horace O'Niell, with their sister Lucinda, were the only children of their parents, born in a camp, save only the eldest boy, who left his native Ireland at four weeks old. The honourable Hubert O'Niell was the second and youngest son of the earl of Dunleer, whose overweening pride was almost proverbial; his ancient title and his ancient name were the objects of his fond idolatry; to these he sacrificed his paternal feelings; and to enrich his heir, the representative of his ancient house and ancient greatness, the haughty earl of Dunleer

Dunleer left his youngest and most favoured child, comparatively speaking, a beggar.

“ My father, for of him I speak, found himself, at twenty-four, heir to no more than five hundred pounds a-year, while the estate of his brother might be called almost princely. Hubert O’Niell had been placed at an early age in the army, and was at this period a captain in a dragoon regiment, then under orders for America, and with him went the aunt of sir Arthur O’Dwyer, fair as the breath of morn, and good as fair, to whom he had been privately married before the death of his father. Her brother, Mr. O’Dwyer, stormed and raged at this union with a heretic; but good sir Roderick paid, with free goodwill, her portion of ten thousand pounds. My father soon obtained the rank of major; and when his sons had sufficient strength to support the standard of their king, they rode as cornets in the same regiment with their father; and though war and tumult
often

often raged around, peace rested on our hearts, and in our dwelling.

“ I will not apologize for being thus minute; I owe this detail to my long-patient Percy. To you, sweetest Flora, I have also promised the history of your parents and my own, and I must necessarily be diffuse, to gratify these children of my heart; and I claim your attention, noble lords, for, in the words of the prophetic Hammersley, I now declare a stranger tongue will tell a stranger story. I intended Hugh O'Dowd should have been present at this recital; but Hammersley insisted, as a reward for his patient endurance of my will, that he should have Hugh O'Dowd all to himself, to tell his tale of wonders as he pleased.

“ Colonel Pakenham, the godfather of my brother, after whom he was named, was peculiarly attached to theatrical representations, and every officer in the regiment was anxious to display his abilities to gratify our good colonel, who was in-

deed the father of us all. We were scene-painters and scene-shifters, kings and cobblers, magicians, musicians, conquering Spaniards, oppressed Peruvians, all and every thing to please him, whose festive heart was ever ready to please all around him. As necromancer or magician, of good or evil fame, no matter which, I bore away the laurel-wreath of victory; no one could sport the veritable conjurer phiz with Hubert O'Niell—it was past compare, a talent, as the colonel named it, all his own when an infant. If surprised or angry, my face assumed the wrinkled appearance of old age; and when theatricals became the fashion, I took infinite pains to increase the wizard-like appearance of my countenance.”

Lord Dunleer fixed his brilliant eyes on the marquis, and the necromancer stood confessed, as “seek not, search not,” echoed through the room. The burning blushes of the marquis spoke his feelings.

“Don't blush so confoundedly, marquis,”

quis," said the amused earl. "If it is any consolation to your lordship, I have deceived older (I will not say wiser) heads than yours; and the day you first saw little Flora, you gave me some trouble to hold the recess firm, for more than once your curious fingers touched the spring, and you must allow my warning voice was very soft on that occasion."

"May I ask if your lordship is a ventriloquist?"

"Certainly not, for I never could make my voice ascend or descend, though I can make it growl through the room at a famous rate. The night I marked your search at Hubert Castle, and laughed so wizard-like behind you, I changed my position: concealed by the hangings of the bed, I entered the room while you were writing, with the intention of making the request, which impulse irresistible made me change into magical command, and I left the room unperceived as I had entered. The warning you received in the
F 2 balcony

balcony was an effort of good nature, to prevent you from catching cold, as I perceived from my own window your uncovered head given to the damp dew of night. With cautious care I opened the door of your dressing-room, and gave the gentle warning thus—and the dews of the evening most carefully shun,” sounded once more like soft music on the ear of the marquis.

Lord Dunleer enjoyed the surprise pictured on every countenance; the fair Flora only excepted, who smiled delighted on her happy uncle; and the earl, without seeming to remark the surprise he had occasioned, continued his narrative.

“The only competitor I had for magic fame was colonel, then captain O’Brien, who was deeply enamoured of my sister, at that period a very lovely girl of seventeen, and, with all the wisdom of that age, believed her brothers to be the matchless pearls of perfectibility. No one could win the favour of the light-hearted Lucinda,

cinda, but he who could exhibit the wizard's physiognomy, the wizard's step, the magic voice of command, equal with her brother Hubert, or sing and dance as finely as the graceful Horace.

“ Poor O'Brien toiled without ceasing to distort his handsome features, but all in vain; his open brow could never wear the wizard's surly frown. In vain he endeavoured to throw around the voice of growling thunder, the charm of dulcet sweetness. His anxiety to surpass stimulated my endeavours to excel, and this friendly rivalry for magic fame caused me to attain a height of necromantic art, in acting I should never have sought for or obtained; and though O'Brien could sing and dance as well, if not superior to her brothers, the laughing Lucy would declare captain O'Brien was no conjurer; till foiled and vexed on every side, poor O'Brien actually got sick of disappointed love and disappointed fame; but his successful rival in fame proved also his successful advocate in love, and, with-

out being a conjurer, captain O'Brien became the husband of Lucinda.

“ Very soon after this union, the regiment was ordered to Ireland, and my father anticipated a happy meeting with his family, after an absence of nineteen years. His happiness was indeed perfected in the land of his nativity—he died in three months after we landed in Ireland; a neglected cold, caught on shipboard, settled on his lungs, and before we suspected his danger, all hope of recovery was over. In two months after, the orphaned brothers, Hubert and Horace, the eldest of whom had not yet completed his twentieth year, followed their mother, the uncomplaining victim of sorrow, to the grave.”

The cheek of lord Dunleer grew deadly pale; his voice trembled as he spoke, and veiling his humid eyes with his hand, his lordship continued many minutes silent.—“ How weak is human nature !” said the earl, as he withdrew his hand; “ we all know that one generation passeth away,
and

and another supplieth the place thereof; yet we have all the weakness to expect our own immediate friends should outlive the allotted time of men, and we cling with adhesive grasp to that world, where daily experience proves that all is vanity and vexation of spirit; yet a moralizing, necromancer," continued the earl, whose brilliant smile was again restored, "is not one of the vanities we daily expect to meet with under the sun."

CHAPTER V.

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### *The Son of Rebecca.*

"OUR regiment was quartered in the north of Ireland, where we were total strangers, for the family estates and residence were situated in the counties of Dublin and Kildare. It was January; the frost had set

in with unusual severity, and the orphan brothers wishing to cheat the now-lagging hours, went snipe-shooting—an exercise or amusement at which they were very expert. In their present frame of mind, a servant was deemed an encumbrance, and they went unattended.

“ The brothers entered on a wild and desolate part of the country, without believing it was necessary to ask permission of the proprietor, or indeed reflecting that such a wild, desert-looking tract of land, inhabited only by a few peasants, as wretched-looking as their habitations, had any owner to be anxious about preserving the birds of the air, while his fellow-mortals were the living monuments of his want of feeling and humanity. The first shot we fired brought a very consequential personage close beside us, and in no very gentle terms he told us we had no liberty to shoot there—strangers were not admitted; his lord had given particular orders to have the game kept up for his lordship’s particular

cular friends, who were expected in a few days.

“ While this man of deputed power, the little great of consequential bearing, was speaking, a young man joined us, whom our hearts bounded to meet, for he bore a strong resemblance to my father. With the decided authority of a master in his voice and manner, he desired we might remain unmolested, and he would bear the little great man blameless to his lord. His manner and language were that of a perfect gentleman, as he requested we would continue our amusement; and gracefully bowing, wished us good sport, and left us.

‘ Mighty well, master Lucius, mighty well!’ exclaimed the angry despot. ‘ Your own footing is not so secure, that you can afford to bring poachers here to loosen the ground under your feet, master Lucius; not that I want to dispute his orders, mind that, gentlemen; and it is not very amusing all the time to be contradicted by a by-blow, seeing he is only a natural son

of my lord's, with all his airs; and if my lord should call me over the coals for this hoity-toity prank of his—I mean of allowing you to shoot here, I would be thankful to ye, gentlemen, to tell the truth at once, that master Lucius, the by-blow, was the fault of all—not me; such kind of cattle are a great plague about a great man's house. I wish he was a snipe for half an hour, that is all.'

'You would not shoot him, my good friend, you surely would not,' said Horace, anxious to gain the information of who he was from this surly hind.

'Well, what suppose I did,' replied the fellow, with a look of surly ferocity, 'what suppose I did, I could not be hanged for snipe-shooting, I suppose, when I am free of the grounds;' and he left us with a look of bitter malignity.

'A heavy shower of snow obliged us to take shelter in one of the cabins, as they are called, which looked more comfortable, that is, less wretched in appearance than  
the

the rest; and from our aged hostess, and only inhabitant of this cottage, we soon gained the information we wanted.

‘The time was,’ said the sad historian, ‘that this estate was the most flourishing in the north, and there was a great factory on it for weaving fine linens, and every year some one in the factory got a premium from the Dublin society for a linen web and the finest yarn. The finest thread that ever was wet by the Ban water, was spun on the lands of Winterton, when the good old earl was alive that owned this great estate, which is now divided unto many masters by his profligate heir; and all the pride our bountiful old master ever had, was in his good industrious tenants and his fine factory; and for every prize that was got for a linen web, he gave a dance on the green, and a noble entertainment it was, and the weaver was king, and the spinner was queen, for the day. Every thing prospered under his hand; how could it be otherwise, when he lived among,

and was the father of his tenants? and we prayed that he might live for ever; but he died, and the hand of desolation came upon us, and scattered us abroad.'

" Her language, so much superior to her appearance, made us inquire who she was.

' The daughter of the parish-clerk, mistress for many years over the spinning girls, whom she taught, at idle times, to read, by way of amusement; and they were all so good and so happy, till the old earl died, and then the scourge and the scorpion took place of the gentle shepherd. Lord Winterton had no son, and his nephew came in for the heirship of his title and estate; and the new lord cursed the sound of the shuttles, and the sound of the spinning-wheels, and the bleach-ground, and the factory, and turned out the good steward for a lazy old rogue, and put the present cruel scourge in his place, who never yet gave mortal man a good word, and of whom the very best only say—" God forgive him!" He joined with the new lord to oppress

press and rack-rent: like the task-masters over the children of Israel, he wanted us to make bricks without straw, that is, to make money without having the means to obtain it; and when my father, like a wise man and a servant of the church, wanted to argue the matter over with this unjust steward, for my lord went far from the sound of the wheel and the shuttle, to squander his inheritance in riotous living in a foreign land, this profligate steward told my father he was fitter for the pulpit than psalm-singing, and did all he could to deprive my father of his clerkship, but that he could not do. He sought to deprive me of this humble dwelling, which my kind and good master bestowed on me for life, as a recompence, he was pleased to say, for my good care of the spinning girls; but he banished my two sons, the only hope of their widowed mother; they could not abide under his control—they could not serve under so hard a task-master; they went with many others to America,



rica, before they were completely impoverished by Mr. Grub, to supply the extravagance of their worthless lord, who died, after all was spent, by his own hand, in England; and the land on which his noble uncle had lived great and good, became divided into many shares, the property of strangers. Winterton Abbey, to which is attached a tract of land worth three thousand pounds a-year, has three times changed its master within these ten years; but the active Mr. Grub still keeps his station.'

'The present possessor, if we are to judge by his son,' said Horace, 'is good and estimable.'

'Yes,' replied the aged widow, with unexpected energy, 'Mr. O'Niell is good and amiable, God bless him! What a sorrowful thing it is to think he is not the real heir of Dunleer, through no fault of his own, but the wickedness of his father! I cannot help calling it so—no, not if he was ten times a greater man of pride than he

he is, with Gabriel Grub the oppressor to assist him.'

"Our curiosity was all alive, and we heard from this isolated, solitary being the history of our own nearest relative; for the studied neglect of the powerful lord Dunleer, experienced for many years by my father and his family, precluded any wish on our parts to seek his acquaintance or his favour.

'The mother of Mr. O'Niell was a relation cast with her widowed mother on the bounty of lord Dunleer; her father had dissipated his patrimony, and left her to beggary, and the friendship of his grand and titled cousin. Rebecca O'Niell was fifteen, and, to her sorrow, she was beautiful; the orphan was guileless, and deceived by her guileful cousin under promise of marriage; but before the birth of Mr. O'Niell, he took unto himself a wife, the daughter of a strange lord, whose only beauty was wealth—whose only attraction in his lordship's sight was noble birth; the virtues

virtues of her heart were no pearls above price to her husband; she was the daughter of an English duke; and for this lady, grand yet unbeloved, he left Rebecca, the blossom of innocence and beauty, blasted by his unholy love, only, he had the insulting cruelty to say, for a season; Rebecca should still be queen of his affections.

‘ The pains of childbirth seized on Rebecca while he yet was speaking, and her widowed mother, kneeling on the cold damp earth, even to the last hour of her existence, cursed the marriage-bed of the haughty lord with barrenness. Her prayer was heard—the earl of Dunleer has no lawful child. Rebecca made one dying effort to preserve her child from want, and collecting all her fast-failing strength, she secretly sent to seek the lady of Hubert Castle; to this upright, honourable woman she told her simple tale of sorrow, placed the infant in her arms, besought her to protect the child, to love the father, and expired..

‘ From

‘ From that day forth the son of Rebecca was to lady Dunleer as her own child, and the haughty lord his father vainly entreated her to leave him to the care of strangers ; but she would not—this noble lady faithfully fulfilled her promise to his dying mother. She placed him for education in the college of Dublin, and reared him like what he is, the son of a lord ; but the man of pride hardened his heart against the son of Rebecca, and he stood before his father, as a bondsman in the presence of his lord, and he would not suffer him to eat meat in his own castle at the same table with himself ; but had a table, and state, and grandeur, for his son, so solitary. In the evening Mr. O’Niell went into the drawing-room, and remained with the guests at the evening repast ; for lord Dunleer has been many years in the habit of retiring early to his own chamber ; though lord Dunleer plainly proved by his conduct, that Mr. O’Niell was no company for himself.

‘ Woe

‘ Wee be to him who attempted to think so likewise ! This oddity of a man never forgave the slightest offence to his son, and never accepted an invitation, when Mr. O’Niell was neglected or forgotten, and made no scruple to sit with him at other men’s tables, who never was allowed a place at his own. A great man sought the vote and interest of lord Dunleer at a coming election, and not knowing the strange ways of lord Dunleer, thought he was quite right not to ask Mr. O’Niell to the grand election-dinner with his father ; but my lord was so mortally offended, that he never forgave, never spoke to him afterwards, and gave his vote and interest all against him, and the great man lost the election.

‘ About three months ago, my lord bought that portion of the estate on which Winterton Abbey stands, and came down here to take possession, and every one says, but Gabby Grub, it is for Mr. O’Niell ; but Gabby hates him, because he wont let him oppress

oppress the poor. Last Christmas eve, chance, Providence I should say, brought this blessed young man to my cabin ; for it is quite out of sight of the abbey, and Gab Grub never troubles the rich about the distresses of the poor. The season was very hard, and the oppressor had left me nothing after the death of my father but this little dwelling, and the garden he could not take : I had no fire, for I was saving sufficient to warm me comfortably on Christmas day, and, sad and solitary, I was trying to spin, though my heart was frozen with cold. Mr. O'Niell came in to shelter from the storm ; he shivered as he looked around, and tears actually dropped from his handsome eyes as he heard my story. About two hours after, his nurse came, and brought me food and raiment ; and from her I heard the history of Rebecca and her son ; and he sent me fuel and a cow, and rebuked with bitterness the conduct of Gabriel Grub, who nevertheless has got the ear of the ill-advised earl, and still keeps

keeps his place; and he growls and he grumbles, and swears he will be a thorn in the side of the by-blow yet, as he has the assurance to call the good and beautiful Mr. O'Niell.'

"The sky cleared as the widow finished her simple story. We vainly endeavoured to make her accept any recompence but words for her communicative kindness, and we left the cottage with a sensation of dislike nearly amounting to detestation for our titled relative. Our thoughts were so occupied by the fate of Rebecca, that we missed the path by which we had entered the grounds of Winterton. A sudden turn in the road brought us immediately opposite the abbey, and we walked forward to take a nearer view of this noble mansion—monument of former greatness; we walked close by the shrubbery, not without hope of meeting the son of Rebecca, whom our hearts bounded to acknowledge as a relation.

"We heard the voice of the tyrant  
speak

‘speak the fawning language of the sycophant, for Mr. Gabriel Grub was the speaker, as he lamented how easily good kind-hearted master Lucius was imposed upon—‘ And these young fellows he was so angry with me about to-day, my lord, humbly begging his pardon, were no gentlemen at all. How could they be gentlemen, my lord, to come poaching on any nobleman’s estate, without either leave or licence, or without even a servant to attend them?’

‘ Would you know them again?’ said a voice of haughty command; and the next moment a tall figure emerged from the shade, wrapped in a scarlet cloak lined with fur, and a large fur cap warmed his dignified head, for, with all his faults, lord Dunleer stood confessed the noble and the gentleman.

‘ To be sure, and to be certain, I would know them again; my lord, and an ill-looking pair they are, as ever the sun shone upon;



“ With great anxiety we watched the arrival of Lucius O’Niell, who came at the appointed hour. Had he been lord Ennismore, the legitimate son of his father, he could not have been attended with greater state. He had two outriders and six horses to his carriage, for the distance of two miles. Before we introduced him to our brother-officers, we claimed his affection as our kinsman, and the glow of pleasure experienced by us all in this first bloom of manhood, time and chance have never changed, though death has severed one link of the threefold chain of harmony and happiness, restored again, I trust, in the person of my brother’s son ;” and the cheek of lord Dunleer again lost its manly hue, as he pressed the hand of his nephew in both his own.

“ The next day brought the stately earl of Dunleer to seek his nephews, proudly gratified at the reception his son had met with, not only from them but colonel Pakenham, and all his brother officers;  
his

his heart dilated into kindness, and his lordship insisted on our returning with him to Winterton Abbey.

“ Lady Dunleer was not handsome, but her virtues were unnumbered, and the polish of high fashion spread fascinating elegance over her manners: our dinner-parties were all parade, grandeur, and greatness, but our evenings were delightful. Gabriel Grub was dismissed, and comfort and plenty again visited the lands of Winterton. Colonel Packenham, as the guardian of his nephews, the bosom-friend of his brother, was treated with marked distinction by lord Dunleer; and our officers became nearly domesticated at Winterton Abbey.

“ Doctor Clements was one of the expected guests of lord Dunleer, and our selected favourite; he had just obtained the privilege of placing M. D. after his name. Doctor Clements was two years older than Lucius O’Niell and I, that is, twenty-two; and we laughed at and ridi-

cured his medical phiz, and worried him into being as merry and as mischievous as ourselves, though he had M. D. flourished after his name.

“ Spring, the harbinger of joy to others, brought, on the balmy breath of May, soft sorrow to our hearts; lord Dunleer returned to Hubert Castle; and even our good colonel wished it had continued winter all the year round, as lord Dunleer never travelled in cold weather.

“ A few months after, the regiment was ordered to England, and we were quartered in the neighbourhood of Clifden; the day Horace O’Niell completed his twentieth year, he first saw Lydia Percival; we were strolling along the road, about a mile from Clifden, when we saw a carriage approaching with great speed; the blinds were closed; but the eagle-eye of Horace perceived a lady’s hand struggling to force one of them down, and we heard a sort of stifled scream, evidently suppressed by force. A stone, thrown by  
the

a skilful hand of Horace, brought the remotest horse to the ground; the next moment the carriage-door was thrown open, and a young lady sank fainting on the bosom of her blooming deliverer. It was Lydia Percival who rested on the bosom of Horace; he bore the senseless beauty in his arms to a house, which stood at a few yards from the scene of action, which we had previously stopped to admire, for its uncommon elegance.

“The companion of Lydia aimed a violent blow at my head, as I prevented his pursuit of my brother, which I avoided, springing aside. His foot slipped, and his own forceful violence brought him to the ground; I placed mine securely on his breast, and despite of his struggles, his recitations, and his threats, kept him there till I saw Horace enter the house, with his ill-lifeless burden; I then released my prisoner, gave him the name he fiercely demanded, and we parted.

“Miss Percival had been addressed by

lord Beregrove, with the approbation of her grandfather, the earl of Coldbrook, whom he had completely deceived. His lordship was a ruined gamester and a profligate, but polished and specious where he had any design to answer. An opinion once formed by lord Coldbrook was seldom relinquished, and the artful lord Beregrove found no difficulty to deceive the heart in which there was no guile.

“ The rejection of Lydia was as decided as her aversion, and lord Beregrove had ceased to visit, for some weeks, at lady Lester’s. Miss Percival had resided with her maternal aunt, the widow of sir Charles Lester, since the death of her parents; the settlement of fifty thousand pounds upon younger children was exclusively her own; and lord Beregrove determined, as persuasion had failed, force should make him the husband of Lydia.

“ Miss Percival was in the habit of visiting a young lady in the neighbourhood, attended only by a servant; the distance  
was

was short, but the situation was secluded; and the servant, bribed by lord Beregrove, assisted to force his young mistress into the carriage, which bore neither arms, crest, or cypher, to reveal the owner. The coachman had mistaken the orders of his lord, to avoid the house of lady Lester; in driving furiously past it, our attention was attracted, and Lydia rescued from the titled profligate.

“ In the evening I received a message from lord Beregrove, and I consented to meet him the following morning at seven o'clock; and willing to spare the anxiety of my friends, I applied to a gentleman in the neighbourhood. Mr. Howard complied without hesitation; and as he was a man of some consequence and much humanity, he vainly hoped to accommodate the business without bloodshed.

“ The place of appointment was a country churchyard, distant about two miles from Clifden: but what language can do justice in the expression, or portray the feelings

which thrilled with wild horror through my heart, as I entered this receptacle for the dead, and saw my brother fall, covered with blood, by the hand of lord Beregrove, an early claimant for the tomb! Both brothers had concealed the horrid secret, to concentrate the danger in their own bosoms. Revenge absorbed every other feeling. Oh, may my heart never again experience such a moment of vengeful horror! the fury of demoniac hate raged through my breast, and circled round my brain, as I mentally swore to revenge my brother, or perish in the attempt. My sanguinary aim was sure; and for the first and only time in my life, I triumphed over a fallen foe; the ball shattered the arm of lord Beregrove, and entered his side.

“ I sought the body of my brother—of him I so deeply deplored, but it was removed; and following the track of blood, I entered a cottage not far distant. The voice of my brother thrilled with such rapturous sensations through every pulsation of  
of

of my heart, that ecstasy became agony, and I fell senseless on the ground. The ball was skilfully extracted from the shoulder of Horace, and in three weeks he was sufficiently recovered to make his personal acknowledgments to the ladies at Lester Lodge, for the ceaseless anxiety they evinced during his illness.

"Lord Beregrove was less fortunate; the skill of his medical attendants preserved his arm from amputation, yet their decided opinion was, it would be nearly useless for life, and always require the support of a sling; the recovery of his lordship was slow, and for some time doubtful, occasioned by past excess and present irritability. Tortured by his own reflections, lord Beregrove became the torment of all around him, while Horace, restored to health and bloom, became a constant, a favoured guest at Lester Lodge; and though love was never named, it glowed on the modest cheek of Lydia, and sparkled in the brilliant eyes of Horace.



## CHAPTER VI.

*The Grandsire.*

“ONE evening, at lady Lester’s, Miss Percival, to gratify our good colonel, consented to join us in—‘*How merrily we live that soldiers be!*’ Our voices sounded in full harmony, when the door was opened with unusual violence, and lord Coldbrook, the grandfather of Lydia, entered. His was a green old age, and his stately figure seemed to mock the power of time, as he pranced or capered up the room, for I cannot call it walking, with all the agility of five-and-twenty—sure indication, as I have since learned, of being in a royal rage, and his frowning brow bespoke the coming storm.

“ Lydia ran to meet her grandfather—  
threw

threw herself upon his bosom, and held up her beautiful mouth for the paternal kiss; but his lordship threw back his head, put his hands behind his back, lest they should unconsciously fold his cherub girl to his heart, roaring, for I can give it no better name—‘ You gipsey, you jade, have you the assurance to think I will kiss such an undutiful little baggage as you? And you, captain Lobsterback,’ cried the earl, fixing his eyes, sparkling with rage, on my face, ‘ march out of the house this moment, my fortune-hunting captain—march, I say, or curse me but I will have you presented as a vagabond, and banished the country—drummed out to the tune of the Rogue’s March. Your travelling title of captain shall not save you from the beadle’s cat-o’-nine-tails, my grenadier captain of Irish bog and Irish brass, in the regiment of swindlers and footpads; go, sing on the highway, “ How merrily we live that footpads be !” March off, I say, and

be thankful I leave the trouble of hanging you to other hands.'

"I calmly replied, his lordship would have some trouble to prove the grandson of the late, the nephew and presumptive heir to the present earl of Dunleer a fortune-hunter or a footpad.

"Lord Coldbrook made a flourishing and very low bow. 'May I take the liberty, my lord Maybe and Wouldbe, in what part of Ireland stands the mud-built castle of your ancestors—the potato-ground and the pigsty which comprise the lordly domains of your uncle, the earl of Dunleer? To spare your modesty, I will answer for you, my grenadier Irish captain; his castle is in the air, and his title is in the moon; so march off, and secure your heirship, or damme but I will make you. Do not think it is my honourable friend, lord Berregrove, you have to deal with, who was simple enough to believe you had a right to wear the uniform  
of

of the ——— dragoons, when he consented to meet you on equal terms, to save this thankless little hussey from being lured to beggary and wretchedness by your swindling arts.'

'Oh, grandpapa,' said the sobbing Lydia, 'how could you believe such a horrid, horrid falsehood? I never saw captain O'Niell, till he assisted to save me from the unmanly violence of the odious lord Beregrove.'

'Great violence you have to complain of, madam Liddy, you little minx. Odious lord Beregrove indeed! because he wanted to prevent your marriage with a swindler, with his castles in the air and his moonshiny titles. My good friend, lord Beregrove, has my thanks and my approbation, and marry him you shall, mind that! if he is a cripple, it is of your own making, Miss Liddy Percival; and I am only sorry my lord Beregrove is not lame of a leg and blind of an eye for your sake.'

“The tears of Lydia fell like drops of melted ore on the heart of Horace; he could endure the smarting agony no longer — ‘My lord, you are deceived; lord Beregrove is a ruined profligate—I can prove him so. We never saw Miss Percival till the morning we were so fortunate as to rescue her from the ruffian grasp of his lordship.’

‘Who the devil are you?’ cried the earl, staring wildly at Horace, who was out of uniform; ‘another of the gang, I suppose. Beregrove mentioned but two, and one of them he sent to hell, to look for his uncle’s pedigree. Hark ye, my fine fellow, is your name Melross? You look plaguy like a rascally acquaintance I had of that name, who swindled me out of the finest deer-park in Christendom, and my friend, the marquis of Leverton, out of ten thousand a-year and the prettiest girl in England; but I will take good care lord Beregrove shall not be jockeyed out of his

his bride, even if you had an uncle or a grandfather a conjurer or a wizard, like parson Melross.'

"Too often the pupil of impulse, it led me to throw the wizard voice on the ear of lord Coldbrook—'Beware, there is a necromancer in the family of O'Niell.'

"Rage and terror was the mingled expression of lord Coldbrook's countenance, as he poured forth a volley of curses on the names of Melross and O'Niell, and bitterly swore Lydia should be the wife of lord Beregrove, if all the devils in hell came jumping to prevent it.

"Colonel Pakenham had remained all this time in a distant part of the room, with lady Lester and the weeping Lydia. The colonel, well acquainted with the character of lord Coldbrook, and his firm belief in magic, suspected I had been at some wizard prank to occasion this very singular flow of oratory, and he walked over to prevent any serious effects from the rageful violence of his lordship. The  
rich

rich uniform worn by the colonel instantly caught his attention, and the outcry made by lord Coldbrook was really terrific, as he accused lady Lester of filling her house with swindlers, and cheats, and conjurers, and banditti; and concluded by swearing Lydia should leave the house that moment, and remain with him at Elmwood Castle till she was married to lord Beregrove.

“ My second father, convinced I was no miracle of patience, took my arm, and desiring Horace to follow, we left the house. The colonel walked homeward with unusual speed, and with unusual care closed the door of his apartment. He took the hand of each orphaned brother, and pressed them to his heart.—‘ My children, the sons of my adoption, will not, I trust, accuse me of partiality in what I have done this evening to rescue the beautiful Lydia from worse than death, from a life of certain misery. Heaven is my witness, you are equally dear to my heart, the sole  
objects

objects of my fondest care. Lady Lester is what I call a good kind of woman of the world, that is, her ladyship would prefer independence with a good man for her niece, to wealth and titles with a profligate; but no love in a cottage for lady Lester, and married misery is best repented in a coach-and-six, is the creed of her ladyship. Well acquainted with the heart of my eldest boy, I have acted, Hubert, as I thought that heart would dictate, and have removed from the mind of lady Lester every doubt for the future comfort and independence of her niece. Her ladyship has consented to the union of Lydia with our blooming Horace, provided you ratify the agreement I have made; as the heir of lord Dunleer, your brilliant prospects are unclouded by the shadow of a doubt, which the increasing infirmities of the earl, your uncle, mark every day more sure. In a will, made about six years ago, I left you joint heirs of my estate; but this evening I have cut  
off



off my first-born with a father's blessing, and ten thousand pounds, the only savings of thirty years of military career, I will not say of glory, but I will proudly say not of dishonour. I have promised to settle my estate on Horace, who, after his adopted father's death, will not refuse to take the name of Pakenham, as lady Lester has confessed the invincible dislike that extraordinary man, lord Coldbrook, bears to every one, no matter who, that has the Irish O to his name.'

"The resistance of Horace was unavailing, and the hand of his brother erased his own name from the will of colonel Pakenham; and one of our officers, who had formerly been a lawyer, made the required alteration in the legal form, to which, for greater security, I affixed my own signature. Major Meredith, *ci-devant* barrister, did the same, not without evident surprise at my anxiety to resign so rich a bequest.

"With the full approbation of lady Lester,

ter, Lydia was that night on the road to Scotland with her lover, accompanied by colonel Packenham; and I proceeded the next day to Devonshire, to make the necessary arrangements for the reception of the new-married pair at Packenham Hall.

“ With anxious impatience I waited the arrival of my beauteous sister, when accident brought a newspaper to my hand, in which was inserted the death of Lydia; it mentioned that Miss Percival had been taken ill on her way to Elmwood Castle, and expired in a few hours, and was buried, at her own request, in Meriton churchyard, two miles beyond Clifden—in that churchyard the hopes of lord Beregrove were overthrown; and well knowing the doting fondness of Lydia for her grandfather, with a refinement of cruelty worthy such a heart, he determined to make it the grave of her happiness; newspaper panegyric was exhausted in praise of Lydia, and the grief of her grandfather displayed with all the glossing mockery of woe:

wee: the intention of the deeply-afflicted earl to join his only-remaining grandchild in Switzerland, where lord Fitzauburne had been for some months with his maternal uncle, Mr. Lewellyn, was also mentioned; and a very beautiful monody, the work of a master's hand, concluded this highly-wrought fabulous history. I concealed this abominable fabrication from the wedded lovers, but took the earliest opportunity to inform colonel Pakenham of this novel mode to punish disobedience.

‘ Lord Coldbrook shall not escape so easily as he imagines,’ said colonel Pakenham, roused into indignant anger; ‘ does his lordship suppose that Horace O’Niell will relinquish fifty thousand pounds, or that our beautiful Lydia is to remain buried alive, to gratify his brain-crazed absurdity? Forbid it, every feeling of common sense. Immediately on the union of my adopted children, I wrote to inform lord Coldbrook of the independence I had secured them—coloured from nature the  
real

real character of lord Beresgrove; and referred his lordship to my cousin, lord Clement, for the truth of all I asserted. I shall wait the return of his lordship's answer, which I requested he would direct to Pakenham Hall; and if his lordship will arouse the lion, he must be made to feel his power.'

"The next morning the expected answer arrived, and nothing but insanity could excuse the violence which dictated every line of this extraordinary production; lord Coldbrook most solemnly swore never to acknowledge Lydia as his granddaughter; and here followed a string of anathemas, evidently culled from the order of excommunication, too horrible to read, much less repeat, if she ever attempted to appear again in the world, or disclose the secret of being alive.

'Thy people must be my people,' said the heroic Lydia, as she wiped the tear of anguish from her eye, and smiled with heaven-born meekness. 'Oh, my husband,

band, let us not incur the malediction of my only-surviving parent; when this gust of passion has subsided, lord Coldbrook will restore me to his bosom—to his family; time will prove how much he is in error—prove the worth of my new kindred—the villany of lord Beregrove; all will pass away, as one of those feverish dreams which too often subjugates the mind of my grandfather; Henry will rejoice in his recovered sister; and though my faultless uncle may reprove, he will welcome with paternal love the smiles of his restored, his happy Lydia.’

“ This is the letter of lord Coldbrook, preserved to prove the cruel, I must say the unwarrantable conduct of his lordship; and when you have perused it, Percy, reflect what must be the feelings of two high-spirited young men, nobly born, the eldest little more than twenty-one, the presumptive heir to rank and splendour. Folded in this letter you will find the marriage certificate of your parents, the  
baptismal

baptismal register of their children, the register of their own early death; nothing has been left undone to prove your affinity to the late and the present earl of Coldbrook.

“Immediately on the receipt of this most extraordinary epistle, colonel Packenham sent to order the attendance of four dragoons, six horses were put to his chariot, and four servants attended in the splendid family livery; two dragoons preceded, two followed the carriage, and in this style we, that is, the colonel and I, entered the avenue to Elmwood Castle.

“The hatchment still continued over the grand entrance to the castle, and I unconsciously placed my hand on my sword, for we were in full dress uniform, to cut down this libel on the living Lydia, when the colonel seized my arm, and softly said — ‘Remember, Hubert, your honour is pledged for silence and forbearance;’ and blushing for my hasty nature, ever prone to error, I accompanied my paternal friend  
into

into the library at Elmwood Castle, where lord Coldbrook was busily employed arranging family papers, previous to his going abroad. The deep mourning of the household bespoke the recent family loss; the corded trunks placed in the hall, the intended removal of his lordship.

“It is unnecessary to repeat the violence of the angry earl, which colonel Packenham endured with the calmness of a stoic; till at length, weary of his own patient endurance, his unavailing attempts at conciliation, the colonel arose with dignified grandeur, that startled the abusive earl.—  
‘My lord Coldbrook, I am going to Mount Hanover, to visit my cousin, lady Josephine St. Clair, that was lately married to your tenant, sir James Colville; I shall remain there this day and the next, as lord Clermont, her ladyship’s brother, has promised to meet me there: from this family, my lord, you can ascertain, I assume no rank to which I am not entitled, and the estate I have settled on my adopted  
ed

ed son, they will prove to your lordship is solid, substantial—earth not placed in the airy heights of Nubibus, as your lordship has been pleased to affirm. I trust I shall prevail on the Mount Hanover party to return with me to Pakenham Hall, and give to my adopted daughter new friends and new relatives, not inferior to those the eccentric cruelty of her grandfather would deprive her of; but I have more reliance on the honourable integrity of Mr. Lewellyn, the fraternal affection of lord Fitzauburne, to believe they will harbour lasting resentment against this faultless girl, to gratify the unnatural whimsies of her grandfather; on the contrary, when the simple tale of truth is unfolded, I expect their praises and their thanks.’

“The countenance of lord Coldbrook evinced the terror he experienced.—‘Do,’ he exclaimed, with wild energy, ‘do fulfil your threats, and make Lydia the veriest wretch that ever crawled this earth in misery,



misery, for I will haunt her private walks, her public way, and curse her as she passes; the malediction of Lear on his disobedient children shall be blessings of peace compared to mine; sooner would I turn maniac, like him, and give my white hair to the blast, than bear the scorn of proud-hearted Lewellyn, who never reared a child, to feel the scorpion sting inflicted on a parent's heart by disobedience; the frown of Henry would fire my brain to madness; fulfil your threats, cold-blooded tyrant, but tremble for the fate of Lydia.'

"The heart I thought was marbled by his conduct, melted to infant softness at the misery he endured; but colonel Packenham was deaf to my entreaties—'This paroxysm will soon be over,' remarked he coldly; 'you are new to the world, Hubert, and as yet have only seen the sunny side of life; his lordship's present mood will last just as long as it will answer his determined purpose to forsake his grandchild, to gratify the villain Beregrove.'

"While

“ While we were speaking, lord Coldbrook was busily employed in writing; it was an order on his banker for fifty thousand pounds, the portion of Lydia.—‘ Take this,’ he cried, ‘ and my blessing to Lydia. You have now gained all you wanted: leave me, and never let me see you more—let me never hear that Lydia is an inhabitant of earth, or my heaviest malediction shall pursue her to the extremity of the world.’

‘ I hope, my lord,’ said the colonel, with the undeviating steady calmness he had preserved during this interview, ‘ your better reason will soon be triumphant over this wild storm of passion; and to oblige your lordship, I shall not mention the marriage of your granddaughter at Mount Hanover. Her husband is personally known to lord Clermont and his sister.’

“ Lord Coldbrook left England in a few days, and remained for more than two years in Switzerland; and lady Lester coincided in our wish to keep the marriage

of Lydia secret, till time should prove how unworthy lord Berregrove was of the high opinion the infatuated earl of Coldbrook entertained of him. Colonel Pakenham was decidedly against this measure; but I must confess I dreaded equally with Horace and Lydia the old earl's malediction.

“ Eight months after this union, we lost our second father, and the earth again seemed desolated to his orphaned children. The last hours of his life were employed in anxiety for their welfare, and his last wishes were faithfully complied with. Horace left the army, settled in Devonshire, and took the name of Pakenham.

## CHAPTER VII.

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*The Proud Oppressor.*

“UNABLE to resist the entreaties of Horace, I also left the army, and remained with him at Pakenham Hall. About two months after the death of our paternal friend, I received a letter from doctor Clements; heaviness of heart pervaded every line, for he spoke of sorrow, misfortune, and Lucius O’Niell. He had incurred the heavy displeasure of his father by marrying a portionless beauty. Miss M’Dermot was young, lovely, and accomplished; her family of as ancient date, as proudly ennobled, as that of the haughty earl. Mary was the descendant of princes. The mother of Miss M’Dermot was sister to the late general Hammersley. When

he was yet an infant in the nurse's arms, she eloped with lieutenant M'Dermot, and her father never forgave this Gretna-Green marriage. M'Dermot was nearly related to the prince C—l—n, who at that period kept up the shadow of princely state in the province of Connaught. The young soldier had little wealth to boast but his honour and his sword. The laurels which his intrepid courage won, were entwined with the cypress over his grave. M'Dermot was killed in battle, but the youthful hero lived long in the memory of his brother-soldiers. Mrs. M'Dermot survived her husband but a few weeks, and the orphaned Mary was reared by the aunt of her father: she was unknown and unacknowledged by the family of her mother.

“ Mrs. Mansell had sacrificed early youth and perfect beauty to age and infirmity: she married a gentleman old enough to be her grandfather, to secure the wealth and power her heart panted to obtain; regal state attended the haughty dame, as far as  
her

her power or her ability could go; and Mrs. Mansell looked down with true Milesian contempt on the mushroom nobility fast springing up around her. Mrs. Mansell lived in the neighbourhood of Hubert Castle, and a friendly intercourse was established between the haughty peer and the as haughty commoner, who felt deeply mortified at being obliged to introduce Lucius O'Niell at her splendid dinner-parties; but the society of lord Dunleer was to be obtained on no other terms, and love's young dream stole imperceptibly into the bosoms of Lucius and of Mary.

“The most favoured guest at Fara's Hall, the seat of Mrs. Mansell, was sir Purefoy O'Donnell. The baronet was of true Milesian ancestry, and wealthy beyond the dreams of avarice. What though sixty winters had wreathed his temples with snow, and left unmellowed by time the stormy passions of his breast?—what though the jealous canker of his temper had sent an unoffending wife to seek for

peaceful quiet in an early grave?—it mattered not. Mary was destined by her aunt to be the wife of him who robbed with terror every feeling of her heart; her tearful agony availed not; and the evening before that appointed for her enforced nuptials, Mary became the wife of Lucius O'Niell.

“The insulting rage of Mrs. Mansell roused the half-dormant anger of lord Dunleer; and mutually irritated against each other, they wreaked their vengeance on the defenceless pair. As Lucius O'Niell married a beggar, the haughty earl solemnly declared beggary should be his portion, and the dishonour attached to the birth of O'Niell was a firm barrier against the pardon or protection of the princely-descended. Mrs. Mansell every hour increased the animosity between the proud earl and haughty dame; and lord Dunleer would have willingly annihilated his only child, to see his widow an outcast and a beggar; and his lordship took effectual  
pains

pains to assure his deserted son, if he accepted any pecuniary assistance from lady Dunleer, it would cause an eternal separation between them.

“Lucius O’Niell had an independent spirit; his abilities were of the very first order, improved by all that science could bestow. He undertook to educate six young gentlemen of rank, and gave such general satisfaction, that his number was increased, even against his wishes, to twelve; and Lucius and Mary enjoyed the independence bestowed by cheerful industry, with a fullness of contentment, which their hitherto-dependent situation precluded them from feeling; but the bitter sarcasms of Mrs. Mansell destroyed the happiness of this unassuming pair. She mentioned, in hearing of lord Dunleer, at a large dinner-party given by lord Conolly, her intention of sending the son of her favourite footman to be educated by Lucius O’Niell.

! That young fellow is now in his pro-



per sphere,' continued the haughty-minded dame. 'It is quite delightful to be unbowed by the spurious offspring of second-rate nobility, for I never considered my lord Dunleer of the first order of true Milesian ancestry.'

"Insult could go no higher; and the beggar princess, as lord Dunleer always in derision called the humble Mary, was marked the victim of his hate.

"The proud earl sent for his son, who had always been equally the object of his pride and his tyranny, and offered to bestow on him the Winterton estate, to have him created a baronet, and returned as a member of parliament for one of his lordship's boroughs at the ensuing election, and to restore him with even increased affection to his heart, provided he would desert the unoffending Mary; or if O'Niell preferred going to India, all that wealth could purchase, or power obtain, should be his own.

"Humble yet firm was the rejection of  
this

this honourable young man; and he returned to his wedded Mary with a heart proudly conscious of his own unfading rectitude, yet deeply afflicted at the unforgiving harshness of his father.

“ It was the eve of a general election, and lord Dunleer openly declared his intention of opposing the parents and friends of those pupils educated by his son. The interest of the powerful lord Dunleer was very great; in one day the pupils of O’Niell were withdrawn, and the proud earl looked down with satisfaction on the ruin he had made.

“ One sentiment filled the bosom of the brothers, Hubert and Horace O’Niell—to rescue Lucius and Mary from the power of their unnatural relatives, to prevail on them to remain at Packenham Hall, till some arrangement could be made for the future establishment of him whose first introduction had secured their fraternal regard.

“ An hour after this resolution was  
H 5 taken,

taken, I was on the road to make this request personally ; Horace would have been my companion, but the confinement of Lydia was hourly expected to take place. With doctor Clements I proceeded to the house of O'Niell in Hume-street, and all his sorrows were forgotten in the delight of our unexpected meeting. A pensive softness rested on the beautiful face of Mary ; meekness and resignation the expression of her soft cerulean eye. Lucius gave a patient hearing to my earnest entreaties for him to leave Ireland, and reside with us at Pakenham Hall. The thanks of O'Niell were manly, his gratitude was dignified.

‘ If I accept this load of obligation, captain O'Niell, it must be on my own terms.’

“ I startled at the unusual formality of this address.

‘ Be not angry, friend of my adversity,’ said this deeply-thinking young man ;  
‘ Hubert and Horace pass the lips of Lucius O'Niell ?—no. Before I married  
my

my much-loved Mary, I looked forward to support her by my own industry; the life of useless dependence had long sickened on my soul: heir only to the misfortunes of my mother, I had no settled rank or fortune; and Mary, equally humble and dependent, readily consented to follow the plan I had drawn of future independence before we were united. I had no hope from lord Dunleer—no expectation from Mrs. Mansell. I did not expect indeed to meet the heavy hand of oppression; but this hour has given me friends and kindred, that I would not resign: for all the pomp and pageantry that honourable birth, that power or title, could bestow. If Mr. Pakenham will accept my services as steward—or agent, if you will, continued the qualifying O’Niell, as he remarked the frown of vexation which darkened my brow at the first appellation he had named, ‘I feel myself fully competent to the task. Early impressed with the idea that my future support must depend on my own exertions,

H 6

exertions, I entreated my earliest friend; lady Dunleer, before I entered college, that I might be educated for one of the learned professions; but this my lordly father would not admit of; and at this period, unacquainted with the future heir of Dunleer, I determined never to become a pensioner on his bounty, if the capricious earl, my father, should leave me, unprovided, to his clemency. I anxiously sought after every useful knowledge. I am a perfect master of accounts, and agriculture has been my most anxious study; and as lord Dunleer never suffered any one to contradict but himself, I made what experiments I pleased, which were generally successful.'

'On your own terms then, my kinsman, my friend, come and reside with those friends who duly appreciate your value; and this lovely girl will find in our beautiful Lydia a sister worthy of her affections.'

"The pleasure which this simple expression

pression bestowed on the heart of O'Niell, glowed on his expressive features, as he softly said—' Mary would never look for equality on the part of Mrs. Paekenham; subordinate was their station—subordinate it must be.' Mary, in her union with him, had willingly consented to sink her lofty pretensions to high birth, to the humble level of her husband's; as the wife of O'Niell, she would feel the kindness extended to them both, and never pass the barrier of respectful gratitude.—' Distinct must be our table—distinct must be our apartments, or I must seek from a stranger's hand that support and assistance, I would accept with grateful pride from those whose virtues are registered in my heart's core. My children, dependent on the industry of their father, must be reared humble as their fortune, and their parents enforce by example that humility so necessary for their station.'

"I consented to all he proposed, and left Ireland without making any inquiry  
for

O'Dowd was as well fed, clothed, and educated, as my heir. On my soul, I believe at this moment he is the best scholar of the two; and if the humility, unceasingly inculcated in his docile mind by his parents, prevented him from being spoiled by your overweening indulgence, even when their warning voice was no longer near him, they are the cause of his deeply-to-be-deplored degradation, which has not prevented his forming, unknown and unacknowledged as he has been till within this hour, an alliance with one of the noblest houses in Scotland."

"Mabel and her family can discriminate," said the major, gravely. "My own near relation, the cousin of Hammersley, to be so treated, scarcely better than a domestic!"

"Hear me for my cause, and be patient while you hear," said the smiling earl, "and I will tell you all, good cousin Percy, and bear in your mind the motto of Lucius O'Niell—" Subordinate we are—subordinate.

nate we must be;" and when you have heard my round unvarnished tale, then blame his father and your uncle, if you can."

A summons to dinner prevented any further conversation for the present, and lord Coldbrook received a message from Hammersley, that he would dine at the Grove with his cousin, Mr. O'Dowd, and would remain there till next morning.

"I wonder what Frank is manœuvring about," said lord Dunleer: "no matter, let him frolic on—the feeling is honourable which guides his every action."

Lord Dunleer was equally anxious as his auditors to bring his eventful history to a conclusion, and when the servants left the room, he again resumed his narrative:

"I answered at the baptismal font for the son of Lucius, and gave him my own name, which the predetermined humility of his father abbreviated into Hugh. Every thing prospered beneath the guiding hand of our kinsman—the fullness of content, the delight of social happiness, was ours:  
Shortly



Shortly after the birth of Hugh, Herace and I met a simple, but not ill-looking, young lad gowking through the shrubbery; he was well but not finely dressed, and a well-stored wallet was slung at the end of a stick, which he carried across his shoulder. He seemed delighted at our appearance, and fearless approached with hat in hand. His accent was Irish, and his manner truly Hibernian, in its native uncultured state.

‘ Please your honour, gentlemen,’ he began, ‘ would you be pleased to tell me where one captain O’Niell, esq. lives in these parts? for I came all the way from Ireland to be his servant at command, without either fee or reward. I can plough and sow, and reap and bind, and plant land and dig potatoes, please your honours, and hedge and ditch, and mow; and moreover, there’s not a led in the county Kildare I’d turn my back to for taking good care of horses; and if it’s quite agreeable to his honour’s worship, captain  
O’Niell,

O'Niell, I'd just as lief sleep in the stable, to save trouble; and I'll be agreeable myself to take the run of the kitchen, just as it comes, good and bad, for I'm neither nice nor dainty, please your honours; and I'm a very handy boy too at making all manner of fishing-flies out of wrens feathers and other little birds; and I was reckoned to make better and steadier dogs, in the way of pointing and setting, than Tim Drescoll the dog-trainer at Lucan; and moreover I can——'

"But the voice of O'Niell stopped the rapid utterance of our new acquaintance, as he exclaimed—'What on earth, Philip Benson, brought you to England?'

'What brought me to England?' repeated Philip; 'your own self, to be sure, Mr. O'Niell.'

"He seized the extended hand of Lucius, and as he pressed it to his lips, the tears of genuine affection fell from the eyes of this faithful creature.

'And how is Mrs. O'Niell, my own  
sweet

sweet foster-sister, Miss Mary M'Dermot that was? I hope she ant waiting-maid to nobody, for you don't look a bit like a footman, Mr. O'Niell, but just like a grand gentleman, as you always did.'

'What are you raving about footmen and waiting-maids, honest friend?' said Horace, his polished brow curved into anger.

'Lord save you, young gentleman,' cried Philip, with great simplicity, 'don't spoil your beautiful face so; if it's a lie, as I hope it is, it's none of my making, but all owing to Miss O'Shaughnessy the toad-eater at Fara's Hall—bad luck to her, that never had a good word for any body yet, barring it brought grist to her own mill! and so she reported all over the country, to please madam Mansell, and to vex your hard-hearted old father, lord Dunleer; and, to be sure, he did rave like mad, at the same time saying that you went as footman, and that beautiful Miss Mary, that was, went to be waiting-maid in foreign parts, seeing his  
cruel

~~C~~rue! hard-heartedness wouldn't let you live in peace and quietness at home, though you asked for nothing from nobody : so I be-thought in my own mind I'd go to service too, not that I'd have the face to have the assurance to put myself on a par with my betters; only for the love and duty I bear you, Mr. O'Niell, and Miss Mary that was, my own sweet foster-sister, I came over seas to hire with captain O'Niell, esq. without fee or reward, just to have the pleasure and honour of doing your work and my own, Mr. O'Niell; and his worship's honour, the captain, will find me a true and faithful servant to my life's end. Amen!"

“ Philip was established as the immediate servant of O'Niell, and it was many days before the delirium of his joy subsided. . . Anxious to be useful, Philip was the complete Scrub of the family; but the children and the horses were the objects of his peculiar care.—‘ Go to Philip,’ was almost the first word spoken by each petted urchin. He knew no greater joy than their  
their

their carcases could bestow—no greater pride than the horses at Pakenham Hall were the finest in the whole country; and faithful and true he has been to the living and the dead.

## CHAPTER VIII.

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The Conclusion.

“EMERTON, a corporate town, which returned two members to parliament, was within half a mile of Pakenham Hall; and when Henry, now called Percy, was nearly two years old, great electioneering was going forward in the neighbourhood. Colonel Pakenham had requested that Horace would call his first son Henry Perceval, as a corroborating proof of his affinity to lord Coldbrook; and his last injunctions were, to present the living Lydia to

to her family, when that hour should arrive when her eccentric grandfather could no longer oppose it. The vote and interest of Horace were solicited by the friends of the rival candidates; but, determined to avoid all party feuds and dissensions where he felt no interest, Horace preserved his own neutrality, and left his tenants to act just as they pleased.

“ Two days before the election, a nobleman of very pompous bearing called on my brother (it was the marquis of Leverton), to solicit the interest of Horace for his eldest son, lord Medway, who was just of age. The marquis, who owned a large estate in Devonshire, took infinite pains to prove his son would be supported by all the men of rank and fashion in the neighbourhood.—‘ My godfather,’ continued his lordship, ‘ the most complete evergreen in existence, has promised to give my boy his personal support; lord Coldbrook has great landed interest in Devonshire, and though past seventy, possesses more active energy.

energy than many men of fifty; you never beheld a finer old Grecian. Allow me, Mr. Pakenham, to introduce my friend, lord Coldbrook, to-morrow.'

'If lord Coldbrook will call on me alone to-morrow, my lord marquis, I will promise my interest, and that of my friends, unconditionally, to your son; though unknown to lord Coldbrook, some of my friends are most anxious to please him, and I wish privately, in their names, to pay this compliment to his lordship.

"With abundance of fine speeches ready coined for the occasion, the most noble the marquis of Leverton took his leave; Horace left me to prepare the mind of his much-loved Lydia for this meeting with her grandfather; and without acknowledging my intention to my brother, I secretly determined to terrify or lure the old earl into restoring the living Lydia to her family.

"The simplicity of Philip was not folly; it was rather a natural mask, which concealed

coaled sheer good sense and quickness of apprehension, and I felt inclined to trust that fidelity I had so little cause to doubt. I told my intention to Lucius O'Niell; he confirmed my reliance on Philip, whose honest faith he would guarantee with his own.

“ With restless impatience I watched the appearance of lord Coldbrook the following morning, who, anxious to serve his friend, made an early visit. No other servant attended but Philip, who conducted his lordship through a small anti-room, seldom used, to the state drawing-room. Concealed by some ornamental drapery, I threw the wizard voice softly and sweetly on his ear—‘ Welcome, earl of Coldbrook; the guardian spirit of O'Niell greets you with kindest welcome; the hearts of Horace and Lydia Pakenham spring to meet their grandsire; earl of Coldbrook, bless and forgive your children.’

“ Philip, true to his instructions, instantly threw open the door, and Horace

and Lydia knelt at the feet of the half-terrified but delighted old earl.—‘Liddy, my darling, my beautiful Liddy,’ exclaimed lord Coldbrook, as he lavished the fondest caresses on his granddaughter, ‘are you really and indeed the wife of the much-esteemed Packenham, and not married, as I believed, for all his prate to the contrary, to that swaggering lobster-back, my lord Wouldbe. You are a very fine fellow,’ continued the earl, looking earnestly on the face of the happy Horace, ‘a very handsome fine fellow; God bless you both, my children! you are the handsomest pair in all Christendom.’

“Lucius, Mary, Philip, and I, remained in a distant part of the room, concealed, for I determined the meeting of Lydia with her grandfather should be sufficiently witnessed. I now advanced, with the infant Henry in my arms; all the smiles and graces instantly fled from the countenance of the angry earl.—‘Who sent for you,’ he exclaimed, with rageful violence,
‘captain

‘captain Swagger-and-Bounce? I never desire to see your brazen face again, my vapouring lord, of Air Balloon Hall.’

“I endeavoured to look humble, but all in vain, for the spirit of the wizard was upon me, and I growled slowly on his ear—‘Receive your great-grandson from the hand of his uncle, and beware how you offend the family of O’Niell.’

“The dismayed but still-angry earl sprang on his feet, for he had seated himself with great cordiality between Horace and Lydia, when the well-tutored boy held out his little arms to his great-grand-sire, and repeated, with infant sweetness—‘Welcome, grandpapa, to Packenham Hall.’

‘Thank you, my beautiful darling,’ cried the completely-subdued earl; ‘thank you ten thousand times, my beautiful darling;’ and, as he covered his infant face with kisses, the wizard and his anger were alike forgotten.

“Perfectly reconciled to the choice his
1 2 granddaughter

granddaughter had made, yet lord Coldbrook could not be lured to acknowledge the deception he had practised, and the scene was acted over again, with increased violence, I had witnessed at Elmwood Castle. That letter now in your possession, Percy, will give you some idea of the strength of language used by the old earl; obstinate in error, yet his lordship had not sufficient art to conceal that he was now fully acquainted with the real character of lord Beregrove, or the terror he experienced of Mr. Lewellyn or his grandson being informed of the part he had acted; and the maledictions he called down on the heads of Lydia and her husband were really dreadful, if they attempted to reveal the secret of their wedded happiness, which otherwise the earl as loudly prayed might continue to extreme old age.

“The voice of the wizard now thundered through the room, and the lion-hearted lord Coldbrook shook with fear.—
‘I, the guardian spirit of O’Neill, will fly
on

on the wings of the evening, and inform the uncle and the brother of Lydia O'Niell Paakenham of the deceptive art practised by her hoary-headed grandsire; till then I leave you, earl of Coldbrook; see that you act ere then an honest, honourable part, or dread my power, my vengeance, weak erring mortal.'

"I almost pitied the agonized terror endured by the still-hardened earl; and we came to a sort of compromise, little satisfactory to any person but himself; but Lydia and Horace trembled at the old man's malediction, which unsparingly extended to generations yet unborn; and the firm-souled Lucius O'Niell shrunk with horror from his threatened vengeance.

"It would weary your patience and my own to repeat the fiftieth part of all that passed; we came at length to the compromise I have mentioned, and consented to conceal this useless secret, till Henry had completed his twenty-third year, from him and all the children of Lydia; and to

prevent, if possible, any intercourse between them and not only their mother's but their father's family, who were well informed of the real rank of Lydia, till that period should arrive.

“ When we had given the solemn promise, oath I might as well call it, exacted by his lordship, the earl of Coldbrook respired with lessened anguish, and at his desire the name of Henry was changed to Percy. When this tumult of warring passions had in some degree subsided, lord Coldbrook mentioned the wizard voice; but we all solemnly protested against any voice being heard but that of the present party. O’Niell gravely remarked, that he had often heard there was a necromancer or guardian spirit in the family of O’Niell, that he was seldom seen, and never heard, but to prevent oppression and ill treatment; and his power and his anger were equally dreaded and felt by those who injured or offended the family he protected.

‘ I wish I could see him,’ said the credulous

dulous earl; ‘I never saw a downright conjurer yet. Lords Greythorn and Melross indeed, I often heard, were much given to magic; but then they looked like other people: I would like to see a good wrinkled conjurer, with his wand and his beard, just such as we read of.’

‘You shall see the guardian spirit of O’Niell,’ softly spoke the wizard voice; and the countenance of lord Coldbrook was illumined into brightness.

“The long absence of the earl had too severely tried the patience of his friend, the marquis of Leverton; we now perceived him riding up the avenue, accompanied by his son, lord Medway; the brothers, and the magic-believing earl, remained only to receive them; and the next day lord Medway was duly elected.

“I appeared in true magical state at the bedside of lord Coldbrook the following night, and left him wrapped in Elysium; I had been to his lordship the most agreeable of kind-hearted magicians, and

left no doubt upon his mind of the reality of magic—a confirmation which the heart of the eccentric earl had long panted to obtain.

“ His lordship remained with us for six weeks, and with joyful haste returned to Pakenham Hall, when the absence of his grandson, lord Fitzauburne, permitted this general holiday; even the eccentricities of lord Coldbrook endeared him to our hearts; unbounded was his love, undisguised his enmity, guileless and honourable his heart, swayed into error only by the worthless Beregrove; but the portion of Lydia he sought not to withhold, to oppress or persecute her husband. A false pride, mingled with a still false shame, prevented his avowing the only glaring error of his blameless life; but peace be to his shade! we loved and we mourned him with filial affection.

“ O’Niell deeply pondered on the heavy task imposed upon us all, which the unfolding mind of Percy proved every day
to

to be more difficult, and, by his guidance, we agreed to send our eldest hope to Scotland for education, and to place him at an early age in the army, that change of scene might prevent any curious investigation, on his part, into either his father's or his mother's family; young Hugh was reared by the determined O'Niell to be his squire, defender, and friend. Hubert O'Niell has proved himself worthy to be called the son of his father, and praise can go no higher.

“The son of Mary was the idol of Philip's heart; perfectibility sat on every look, and motion, and smile of this darling boy; and the voice of Philip, and his alone, could lure every secret thought from his sleeping favourite; thus he unconsciously divulged what inquisitorial tortures would not have forced him to reveal.

“In beauty's bloom, in manhood's prime, Horace and Lydia were called to their native skies; and the fever which terminated their existence, raged for many days through the veins of their desolated

brother, whose first care was, when reason and energy were restored, to place his orphaned nephew in Scotland, nominally for education, but really to separate him, till the allotted period, from his family.

“To doctor Singleton, the rector of Emerton, I communicated as much of my family history as I thought necessary, for my sacred promise only extended to conceal from the children of Lydia their family connexions; and without entering into minute particulars, or betraying their relationship to lord Coldbrook, I acknowledged a secret was to be revealed when the eldest of these orphan boys had completed his three-and-twentieth year; for Hugh had been reared by his parents as the child of his master's bounty, as O'Niell, to him always called my brother, the family name, the deep-thinking Lucius was apprehensive might lead to a premature discovery, and he gave the name O'Dowd, which was that of his nurse, to his son.

“Percy, like his uncle, was fated to
lament

lament the death of a living sister. Flora O'Brien, which is her baptismal name, was educated by my sister as her own daughter; to separate Percy Pakenham from every kindred tie, I was reported as dead, and my heart bled as I secretly witnessed the unexpected grief of the youthful mourner for his uncle and his sister. Doctor Singleton accorded to my wish, and became the nominal guardian of my nephew; by his advice, who guaranteed the principles and the abilities of his friend, I placed these seemingly-isolated boys with a clergyman in Scotland, and never had occasion to regret the selection made by the worthy rector.

“ Philip followed the fortunes of his favourites; but before this anxiously-sought-for indulgence would be granted, his long-headed master, as Philip always called O'Niell, made him take a solemn oath to reveal all he ever openly heard of his young master's every thought, which he could lure at will from his sleeping favourite;

thus every action, every thought, was open to our view; and with pride of heart I now declare, my kinsman and my niece have no cause to blush for this recording register.

“ I remained for some months in Scotland, and every Sunday saw at kirk my thriving boys, for disguise to me was pastime; and more than once I have addressed my nephew as a wandering mendicant, and always found the open hand of charity was his; and artless Hugh has bestowed his last shilling, won by my artful tale.

“ You remember the crimson satin, Percy, and the surprise my first letter occasioned parson James, that is the traveling name given him, I think, by Hubert O’Niell. I had due notice given me by Philip of your intention, and witnessed the bargain-making abilities of my faithful ally in M’Gregor’s shop. As we expected some resistance on the part of Mr. and Mrs. James, I gave the letter to Philip, which he conveyed with great dexterity into

into the pocket of our good parson, whose mind was relieved, at my request, by doctor Singleton, who acknowledged he had been played a friendly trick, but requested he would make no inquiries; he also acknowledged there was a secret attached to the birth of his pupils, which a few years would unfold—mentioned them as nearly related to each other, and requested secrecy, which he as faithfully observed.

“ All the letters you received from me, your unknown guardian, were placed, by the hand of Philip, with whom I constantly corresponded when not immediately near you, who conveyed them, by my orders, as secretly away.

“ Shortly after the appearance of Mrs. James in her Christmas finery, I received a summons from lord Dunleer, and Lucius O’Niell, with little hope of forgiveness from his stern father, went with me to Ireland. As I entered the chamber of lord Dunleer, I was shocked at the alteration disease had made in the once princely-looking earl.

Dropsy

“How on earth,” said the deeply-blushing major, “did you find that secret out?”

“I was present when doctor Singleton gave up his guardianship, and followed to the bank where you lodged the twenty thousand pounds saved during your minority; you divided fairly with squire Hugh, ten thousand pounds were placed in the English funds, for the sole and separate use of Hugh O’Dowd; the fortune of Lydia, fifty thousand pounds, was settled by your father on younger children, and is now, with the accumulated interest of thirteen years, the portion of Flora; this, I hope, will convince a noble lady of our acquaintance, that I had no wish to impoverish her family by engrafting an Irish beggar on the noble stock of Heatherly; nor shall my heir enter the family of a Scottish laird, but as the heir of the ancient and honourable house of Dunleer should do.

“Forgive me, Percy, if I have delayed your happiness; it was only to establish it
more

more firmly: if I was proud, my pride was the result of reason. Everywhere I heard your merit acknowledged, but your hereditary rank as a gentleman always doubted; you acknowledged no kindred tie on earth, and those who envied what they could not emulate, even doubted your claims to honourable birth. You remember Cameron of Glenheather; he was one of Rosa's wealthiest suitors: a bitter sarcasm, uttered by the dauntless young laird, first drew the maiden sword of Hubert O'Niell. Cameron asserted your birth must be either dishonourable or obscure, or both; that you had no kindred tie, or friend, or fellow upon earth, but what chance had obtained for you in Scotland. The eyes of Hubert sparkled with indignation as he addressed the youthful calumniator—'Mr. Cameron, you are master of the sword; I wish to try my skill with yours, even at the Highland broadsword—name your weapon. Glenheather, unqualified as unfounded has been your aspersions

aspersions on one who never insulted or offended you ; and I believe you to be too honourable to refuse me that satisfaction your own unbridled liberty of speech has forced me to demand ; for deeply have you wounded every feeling of my heart, in the person of my earliest friend, Mr. —— ;’ and Hubert addressed the laird of ——, “ if you will lend me a sword, I will promise not to disgrace the weapon accustomed to a nobler hand. You only have heard the insult offered to captain Pakenham ; condescend to remain, while I prove he has one friend to stamp these accusations false.’

“ Young Cameron was brave, and proud of his skill, and love was the watchword to conquest, as he already in idea triumphed over the humble Hugh ; and the gallant Glenheather earnestly entreated Mr. —— would grant the request of O’Dowd, and promised, in a soft whisper, he would use his victory with lenity— ‘ Nor will it lessen this young fellow’s consequence,’

consequence,' proudly remarked the youthful boaster, 'to have measured swords with Glenheather.'

'The moment,' said the laird of —, from whom I learned the story of Hubert O'Niell's calm courage, 'the moment I saw him poise the sword, I knew him master of the weapon; and after a few passes, with an effort of superior skill, he sprung the sword out of Glenheather's hand, who stood unarmed, and at his mercy.—"You seem to have been out of practice lately, Mr. Cameron," said Hubert, mildly; "take up your sword, and hold it more firmly," and Hubert, with graceful ease, rested on his own.'

"Cameron was generous as brave, and the reconciliation which took place between these spirited young men was equally honourable to both; and at the earnest request of Hugh, the quarrel or the cause was never after named. I had a disjointed account of this fencing-match, I may call it, from Philip, which took place shortly before

before you left Scotland for Devonshire, which strengthened my resolve never to allow your marriage to take place, till with equal, if not superior, claims to noble ancestry you could demand your promised bride."

"Oh, my faithful, my precious Hugh," said the glowing major, "how far beyond praise in every way has been your unerring conduct!"

"You certainly, major Percy, endeavoured your very best to spoil him," said the earl, good-humouredly; "but the wizard contrived to keep him in right good order. You need not be making up that sour face, Percy, for the greatest plague that ever mortal man was plagued with was that young torment; his canting, praying, devil-defying phraseology was past all human endurance; and if I did shake him, and pull his hair, I had no other way to tame or make him civil; but he always returned greatly the worse for the ill usage he received at my hands. Mr. Percy Pakenham,

Packenham, was I to pass over, like a tame pigeon, the resignation he prevailed on you to send, when I chose you to remain in the army? and Philip yelled like an Indian, when I insisted he should give an opiate to his overgrown darling, by way of a composing cordial. Expecting I would have no easy task to perform, both with the knight and his squire, I determined to give master Hugh a good magical fright at once, to save future trouble.

" About a mile from the castle of Mr. —, stood a ruinous old building, completely isolated; and in this old remnant of former greatness resided a wrinkled hag, a cow-doctress, who kept stewing herbs constantly over the fire, and muttering to herself, like a second Hecate. I purchased the use of her castle for three days, with more money than her drugs and her castle were worth, and threatened to boil her in her own stewpan if ever she breathed a word of my being there, and confessed I wanted to reduce a rebellious son to obedience

obedience and good behaviour. I had brought with me from Ireland two side-scenes of a pantomime, ably executed by an Italian artist, in which was a view of the infernal regions; and infernal was the expression of every horrid countenance. Squire Hugh was removed in his sleep, placed on a bed of straw, and his dismantled chamber decorated with the pastimes of Pandemonium. Never shall I forget his waking screams; he really fainted with terror, and believed all was reality around him.

“ Lucius and Mary often accompanied me to Scotland, to look, at kirk or fair, on the blooming boys, fast growing into manhood. I consented Mary should take a nearer view of her son, provided she would wear the habit of a witch, and conceal her still rose-and-lily complexion. The next morning the anxious Mary was as yellow as a gipsy; Philip told me he was quite sure master Hugh would never eat one bit till he saw master Percy again.
He

He was perfectly right; my threats, and the entreaties of Mary, were equally unavailing; eat the tormenting young imp would not, and I had no wish to have him sick on my hands, when I suddenly thought on the stewpan of the cow-doctress, which I saw fuming on the fire five minutes before. I instantly robed, and daubing my hands and face with soot, to look more hideous, I seized the infernal mess, the smell of which was enough to poison old Satan himself, and paraded into the chamber of master Hugh, who was now in a good bed, and a good breakfast beside him, if he chose to eat it; but the sight of old Meggy's stewpan performed wonders, and one flourish of the ladle was more efficacious than the tears of the gentle Mary, who really believed I was going to throw the horrid mess down her poor boy's throat. Percy became amenable, and squire Hugh was restored to his long-ing arms; colonel Woodville was my most intimate friend, and to his care I confided
the

the object of my proudest hope, my fondest care."

"May I ask, my lord, if you were near me when I took ill on the road to Devonshire?"

"I travelled with the regiment from Scotland, and summoned doctor Clements to attend you, who has since acknowledged he had no hope, for many days, of your recovery. Unbounded was my vexation, when chance introduced you to the marquis of Heatherly, and I rejoiced in the sudden order which removed you at the same time from him and your Scottish friends; but the climate of Jamaica disagreed with your lovesick constitution, and I had to console my mind with a perspective view of another year's torment.

"After you I posted to Cumberland, and witnessed, in the habit of a sailor, your meeting with the marquis of Heatherly; your precaution, of speaking in the Spanish language, preserved not the secret from me, and I determined to preserve
serve

serve the wife of your cousin from insult and from injury. The real character of the signora da Cortina I was perfectly informed of a few months before. It had cost me some trouble to save a young friend of mine from the despoiling acts of this syren. Your opinion of the wild Irish was at this period very flattering, marquis—this cursedest of all isles, this land of bogs and bears, of brutes and blunders!”

“ Oh, forgive me, lord Dunleer, and let my ignorance obtain the pardon of my ill-judging folly; for in this happy island I have met with all the fascination that could attract, all the charms that could secure the heart of man.”

“ Flora, we have to thank you,” said the earl, bowing with mock gravity to his niece, “ for this compliment to our native Erin; but we will wave fine speeches for the present, marquis; time wears, and the spirit of weariness is growing fast upon me.

“ Determined to prevent the marriage of my nephew for another year, and my nephew determined it should take place in a few weeks, to leave England at this period was impossible. I wrote to my trusty and well-beloved friends the history of Rosabel and Henry, nor was the conduct of her noble-minded cousin sketched with a careless hand. Voluminous I might call the packets addressed to my confederate friends, who entered heart and hand to support the cause of innocence and beauty.

“ It was no difficult task to find out the person appointed to secure a proper residence for lord Ellesmere, and Mr. —— readily accepted the offer of colonel O’Brien, and good-natured Frank was turned out of his house to accommodate lord Ellesmere. The apartments of lady Fitzau-burne were those of Miss Hammersley, and the ingenious Frank contrived to make the recess a door of communication
between

between the two houses, should any ill treatment make the disappearance of our sweet Rosa necessary.

“ You remember the handsome footman, marquis, whose language and manner were *rather* above his station, who gave you the card, and secured the apartments for Rosabel ?”

“ His countenance was so gratefully registered in my heart, that I have often traced in your lordship’s features a strong family resemblance ; but ‘ seek not, search not,’ prevented my making any inquiry after this my first benevolent friend.”

“ It was Lucius O’Niell, the father of Hubert, equipped in a new suit of livery, intended for one of his own servants.

“ Rosabel secured from every evil, as far as human foresight could accomplish, my next task was to prevent the long-projected marriage of my nephew ; but I leave it to Hubert O’Niell to recount his adventures with old Beelzebub. Of flattery I cannot accuse my single-

hearted godson. I detained Hubert purposely in Devonshire, that you might have leisure to cultivate the good opinion, and secure the affections, of your uncle and cousin for Hugh O'Dowd beside you; a tenth part of your regard was quite sufficient for any other person.

“ After I had disposed of Hugh, I hastened to Scotland, and appeared in my own name and rank at the Castle of ——. I confessed there was a secret attached to your birth, and entreated Mr. ——— would delay the marriage of his daughter, till the allotted time, that all could be revealed with honour, and pledged my sacred honour he would find the rank of the youthful bridegrooms fully equal to that of the beauteous brides; and gently hinted my astonishment that a man of wealth and power like him should bestow his exquisitely-lovely daughter, his only child, on a young man devoid of kindred ties or ancestral rank, or that dependent Hugh O'Dowd, who could not even tell the
place

place of his nativity, should win his favour and his kinswoman.

‘ Virtue and honour are the noblest boast of ancestral pride,’ proudly replied the Scottish chieftain. ‘ I have chosen well and wisely for my daughter: the banner of Percy in the shade, or in the sun, will still be supported with dignity, and Hugh O’Dowd is Percy’s kinsman at least in worth and honour. It has been asserted,’ and the still handsome face of lady Sabina curved into angry scorn, ‘ it has been reported that Sabina prefers proud and lordly ancestral bearings to the sublime virtues of the heart, and perfect purity of conduct; but my actions on this occasion will, I trust, prove how much more highly I value living merit than dead men’s bones, than lordly banners, or than sculptured tombs, not but I give to noble ancestry distinction due; yet he whose every action ennobles the name he bears, should rank with princes in every honest heart, and such is my much-loved Percy and his
K 3 kinsman.

kinsman. Where would have been the pride of Sabina now—humbled to the dust, childless and widowed, but for these noble sons of peerless perfection; and I have often grieved that Mabel was not my daughter, that gallant Percy, graceful Hugh, might be indeed my sons.'

"Yet after all the flourishing of the lady Sabina, I could perceive the intelligence I brought of high-born ancestry, gave a higher shade of dignity to her graceful step; while, to use an oriental phrase, I felt sufficiently wise at the moment to kiss the dust of her feet, though certainly none appeared on her white satin slippers. I gained a willing kiss from each lovely girl, as I twined the emerald wreath through their silken hair, and clasped the necklace on their snowy bosoms; and I returned to Ireland with a heart glowing with thankful pride.

"With all the profound wisdom of human calculation, I determined on making Flora the wife of her supposed brother,
Lucius

Lucius O'Brien ; I speak his eulogium, Percy, when I esteemed him worthy of your sister ; and I never suffered my adopted daughter to mingle in society, till I could bestow her on the husband of my choice. Such was my wise arrangement ; but Lucius thought proper to arrange matters otherwise, and choose a wife for himself. I took Flora with me to Wales, and having ascertained you were completely satisfied to remain with your uncle, I returned to Hubert Castle.

“ Lady Fitzauburne was now, by the friendly precaution of doctor Clements, chiefly confined to her own apartments, and I could not refuse the entreaties of Mrs. O'Brien to give the sweet and gentle girl the society of Flora ; and as I had previously met her ladyship at my sister's, I frequently obtruded myself for an hour or two, to vary her otherwise nearly solitary seclusion. Frank was famous for making peepholes, and he contrived one in the recess, through which we could as-

K 4

certain,

certain, unobserved, if the sitting-room of lady Rossabel was unoccupied by visitors. This fated morn the recess concealed the marquis of Heatherly, and it was past his usual hour of retiring from the apartments of his cousin. The moment Flora perceived his lordship, she came to prevent my entrance; and weary of holding the spring against his persevering hand, the wizard voice preserved our secret, and I determined the marquis and Flora should never meet again, till she became the wife of Lucius O'Brien.

“ Three weeks after this fixed resolve was taken, Lucius came to Hubert Castle, his face glowing with happiness; and without harbouring a doubt of my compliance, asked for my ward Rosina Hammersley in marriage. The greatest act of self-command I ever yet could boast, was concealing at this moment the disappointment I experienced. The most fastidious could not disapprove the selection O'Brien had made; Rosina was young, lovely, and accomplished,

plished, every way worthy of his love, and her fortune as large, if not superior to that of his supposed sister. An uncle of her father's had left his India-accumulated fortune between the sisters; and this union was agreed to take place, when lady Fitz-auburne was restored to her husband.

“This was fated to be a season of surprise. The next morning brought sir Arthur O'Dwyer so full of rapturous ecstasy, so incoherent, yet so happy, that I asked, in no very sweet temper from my recent disappointment, if a mad ass had bit him by the way?

‘I'd as lief meet an ass as a bear, cousin my lord Dunleer,’ said the half-offended baronet, ‘for, to my mind, an ass is the most agreeable and best-natured brute of the two.’

“Unwilling to offend this pearl of all his tribe, I lured back the smiles to the open brow of sir Arthur, and heard, with equal pleasure and surprise, that Medora Hammersley, the eldest of the two girls, had

fixed her affections on my worthy kinsman. Rosina had revealed the secret to her lover ; and Lucius, as he disclosed the tale of secret love, half trembled for the sanity of sir Arthur, his joy was so excessive.

‘ Only think, my cousin young Lucius O’Brien, the little girl I loved so long and so dearly, and all too without a hope, should think of loving me, seeing I am twelve years older, and no way polished in the way of making fine speeches.’ And while the delirium of delight still whirled through his brain, the baronet posted to Hubert Castle, to ask the consent of her guardian, as in duty bound. Unqualified was that consent. Medora had chosen well and wisely. Miss Hammersley was one of those soft charmers, the generous temper of sir Arthur would delight to cherish and protect ; and with every prospect of happiness for my beautiful wards, Mr. Gordon commenced arranging their marriage-settlements ; and without a sigh for their future welfare, I saw this double
union

union take place two days before I left Ireland.

“ A few days after this visit from sir Arthur O'Dwyer, as I sat, with vexation of spirit, reflecting on the vanities of this nether world, doctor Clements made his appearance. He seemed ill at ease, dispirited, and unhappy ; and I soon learned I had a new scene of vexation to encounter in the sudden and unexpected attachment of the marquis of Heatherly ; for I could no more reveal the birth of Flora than that of her brother ; nor should this child of my heart, this daughter of my adoption, my second Flora O'Brien, ever enter any family unacknowledged by her own.

“ Determined the wanton breath of the signora da Cortina should never fan the innocent cheek of my darling, I secluded her chiefly at Hubert Castle ; and there I determined she should remain, till her brother had completed his twenty-third year ; but the agony endured by doctor Cle-

ments compelled me to accede to his wishes, for he as deeply deplored the fate of his youthful favourite, as if the marquis was already in his coffin, the victim of hopeless love, and confessed he had passed a sleepless night, to devise some means to relieve this life-consuming malady of the youthful lord. The good doctor seemed shocked at my infidelity; for though I acknowledged love might embitter, it never yet cut short the days of man—I spoke from experience, for I loved—oh, how sincerely! I lost in beauty's early bloom the idol of my soul's affections; and though I suffered days of bitterest anguish, yet years of social happiness were mine.

“The cogitations of doctor Clements during the preceding night brought forth the wizard plan, and wearied by his entreaties, combined with those of colonel O'Brien, I consented to appear in wizard guise; and the promise I made at that moment I never had cause to repent.

“That promise, earl of Coldbrook, I call
on

on you to fulfil! bestow this cherished girl, this bright reward of all his virtues, on your nephew, Percy Pakenham! I call on you to salute the marquis of Heatherly as a brother worthy of your love."

Again must we lament the want of appropriate language, to display the grateful feelings of this happy party to the excellent lord Dunleer.

"My friends," said the nearly-exhausted earl, "I next refer you to Hammersley for the metamorphosis of the deer-park. To-morrow morning I shall not meet you at breakfast; when agitated or fatigued, I always take a few hours additional repose, and I wish to appear in unwearied health and happiness to the highly-valued friends I expect to meet here to-morrow."

The next morning, light as the feathered Mercury, Hammersley entered the chamber of lord Dunleer, followed by the as light but agitated footsteps of Hubert O'Niell. The earl was awake, and Hubert knelt beside the couch of his godfather—

"Forgive

“Forgive me, lord Dunleer,” he softly said, “and let my ignorance plead the apology for my offences. I knew not, when I defied the wizard’s power, that I was insulting the steady friend of my father’s bitter adversity, to whom he not only owes the present independence he enjoys, but the blessing of a dying father, infinitely more precious to a virtuous heart. Forgive me, lord Dunleer, for my father’s sake, the living monument of your virtues and your bounty, or I never will forgive myself.”

The greatly-agitated earl pressed the sensitive Hubert to his bosom—“Son of my only surviving brother; worthy of such a father; I have nothing to blame—nothing to pardon; be ever thus, and be the pride of your father’s heart, a crown of honour to his head: but remember the humility praiseworthy in Hugh O’Dowd is no longer necessary—would be meanness, in Hubert O’Niell.”

“Accuse me not of too much humility;
I fear,

I fear, my lord, it might more properly be called the pure essence of pride, that would not be made more humble than my fortune. I dreaded to outstep my original meanness, lest the correction due to upstart insolence might follow, and I felt a wounded spirit was not to be borne. If major Pakenham could not escape the tongue of malevolence, what had I, the creature of his bounty, to expect? and I daily repeated over in my own mind the lessons of humility inculcated by my then-unknown parents, and earnestly endeavoured to walk steadily in that path destined for me to tread."

"My young philosopher," said the smiling earl, "your trials of humility are now over; be ever thus; depart not from the just principles which have hitherto guided your actions, and continue an ornament of rectitude to the noble name you bear, which I proudly believe will never be dishonoured by you. Hammersley, you have my heartfelt thanks; but we will speak of this
this

this at a more appropriate season. I would again seek repose: let me not sleep too long; you know the hour, my faithful confidant."

The earl again took the hand of his godson, and the grateful Hubert pressed the forgiving hand, as he esteemed it, with thankful agitation to his bosom. Hammersley smoothed the pillow, settled the nightcap, and disposed the couch of lord Dunleer as most conducive to repose; then playfully kissing his forehead, bid him go to sleep like a good child, and he would call him in proper time.

"Happy Mr. Hammersley," said the admiring Hubert, "that can make every one do just as you please, you are so good, so fascinating."

"We have no time for compliments at present, cousin of mine," said Hammersley, taking the arm of O'Niell. "I have asked major Pakenham to breakfast with us at the Grove; I see him even now parading the lawn, anxious to embrace his new-found

found kindred, and I feel all anxious to declare how famously you escaped the clapper-clawing of old Beelzebub."

" Oh, Mr. Hammersley, if you have any pity for the contrition I feel, repeat my folly no more, or I shall dread, as much as I admire and love you; let me not look with terror on the heart-winning smile of him who was the first harbinger of unexpected, unthought-of joy to my heart with dread, lest that smile should change to the general laugh of ridicule, excited by his well-told tale of my ignorance and folly."

" You are the first, Hubert O'Niell, that ever thought Frank Hammersley ill-natured. Set your heart at rest; that man breathes not the vital air that should insult or ridicule you in my presence, even though your sword was incompetent to guard the life and honour of its master: fear not, my too-sensitive kinsman; the mirth of Hammersley has always been unmixed with satire, and on my faith and honour,

honour, all the remorse and contrition you so keenly feel for unintentional error, if error it can be called, would be my own, if by incautious gaiety I should wound a heart so pure and guileless.

“How rich in kindred does this morning make me!” said the glowing Hammersley, as he pressed with graceful fervour the hand of major Packenham. “Was I not prophetic, major, when I said a stranger tongue should tell a stranger story? and who shall deny Hubert O’Niell is truly and indeed my cousin? Confess the truth, good cousin Percy; acknowledge you believed Frank Hammersley to be a poetizing prater, sportively-minded, to deceive the half-believing Hubert.”

“The profundity of your wisdom was far beyond the reach of fancy’s sketch, most potent, wise, discerning major. I will acknowledge, my sportive cousin, the surprise was far outbalanced by the pleasure I experienced, as I heard the prophetic

phetic words of Hammersley confirmed the certainty of being allied to so much excellence as his."

"Sweet are the honeyed words of praise," replied the gaily-smiling Frank; "but I feel a keener appetite at present for more substantial food, and so, my gentle coz, let us to breakfast."

"But tell me, Hammersley, are the two gentle little girls, Mary and Evelina O'Niell, that Hubert and I used to decorate with flowers, as they led the infant Flora on the lawn—are they grown up with all the loveliness their early beauty promised?"

"They are indeed most lovely, united to men of worth and fortune, equal to the most sanguine wishes of their friends. Mary met at an assembly in Banbranie Mr. Mansell, a dashing young barrister of good fortune, and great professional talent, nephew to the late husband of old princess Rusty Fusty. He was charmed with the meek-eyed Mary, followed the charmer to

to her father's house, and they were soon after married. Without preface, he brought his bride to visit her every-way great aunt, and old royalty, surprised into this meeting, condescended to extend the olive-branch. The fact is, lady Hieldebrand was too worldly-wise to quarrel with a relation who was useful and respectful, and would not be offended in the person of his Mary. Evelina came on a visit to her sister, and Mrs. Mansell, in this lovely young creature, saw her own early beauties again restored to an admiring world. 'Joy seized her withered veins,' and for this second Evelina M'Dermot, for so the sister of Hubert was named, the early disobedience of her mother was forgiven. In Fara's Hall the heir of lord Conolly first met this unassuming rose of beauty. The harp sounded, as in days of yore, at the nuptial feast, and the setting sun of the haughty Milesian dame shone with meridian splendour on that day her heiress was married in the true Milesian line of noble ancestry.

ancestry. My sisters were her bridesmaids. Three days after, sir Lionel and lady Ogleby witnessed their happy nuptials. Horace, the second son of Mr. O'Niell, has just entered college; two bantling boys of three and four years old remain at Winterton Abbey with their parents; and now, sweet friend, if you love me, ask no more questions, for I am half-famished with hunger, and Hubert must be in an actual state of starvation."

His grief was so excessive, he could eat no bread till restored to the favour of lord Dunleer, whom he had so grievously, yet so unintentionally offended. The eyes of Pakenham and Hammersley met the expression; the language of both was the same, that Hubert was the most aggrieved, the most offended of the two.

After breakfast, major Pakenham mentioned the promise made by lord Dunleer, that Hammersley would relate the metamorphosis of the Grove, and they proceeded to Elmwood Castle. Hubert O'Niell no longer

longer refused to accompany his friends on equal terms. Though still modest and unassuming, he felt the delightful sensation glowing at his heart, that he was indeed the son of Mary, the near relation, divested of the baton bar of the nobly-descended Hammersley, the son of that self-ennobled father whose every action dignified his station. Modest, yet unabashed, Hubert O'Niell received the congratulations of the Elmwood party, and Hammersley commenced his promised explanation of the suddenly-changed grove.

“ When my guardian asked me to visit Wales, I knew in my soul I was turned out of Ireland for bad behaviour; but lord Dunleer clothed his wishes in such a holiday garment, that I could not refuse to put it on, eagerly anxious to wear any garb conducive to the happiness of so much excellence as his. The secrecy imposed on my guardian by lord Coldbrook, extended no farther than to conceal from the children of his brother their near affinity
to

to the noble houses of Coldbrook and Dunleer. His lordship declared anxiety often became agony, when he reflected that he must appear to these young men, paternally beloved, each of whom he esteemed as the son of a much-loved brother, as a severe task-master, a harsh and cruel guardian, who crushed every opening joy, every blossom of hope, in their young and honourable hearts; and as I listened to his fairy legend of hitherto-unknown relative ties, I pitied, I admired, but loved him more than ever.

‘To you, Hammersley, I can trust the charge of removing from the mind of Percy and his cousin the dislike, the hatred, they must feel to him who crossed their fondest hopes, and wearied, with tyrannic power, their long-enduring patience; and tell them, Hammersley, my own heart bled at the torments I inflicted—that a frown on either polished brow, when they know my secret, will tell my quick-feeling heart that I have tortured beyond forgiveness.

Lure

Lure from the guileless Hubert every secret of his heart—teach him to love the bosom friend of his father; and, for that father's sake, oh, may his angry detestation of the wizard be blotted out for ever! Into your hands, Hammersley, I commit my cause; I am not used to supplicate—refuse me not, my kinsman; the mission on which I send you is very near my heart: fascinating boy, win for me, as you can, the love, the confidence, the forgiveness of your cousins.'

“So flattered, so caressed, what could I do but readily obey?” Then suddenly taking a hand of each—“Let me not plead in vain, my newly-recovered, my highly-valued kinsman; let not my guardian suppose in you I have lost the power of pleasing, or that his cause was entrusted to a careless or unworthy hand; or, worse than all, he should be made to feel those hearts, which he proudly believes enshrined in every virtue, should harbour resentment for actions enforced by a solemn oath. Remember

member, Percy, his conduct to your parents, when he resigned the rich bequest of colonel Pakenham, to secure their wedded happiness; and but for his fast-rooted friendship, his second brother, Lucius O'Niell, had never met a dying father's blessing—had never known, ungifted with toil, the blessings of independence—had seen his daughters wedded in that rank suited to their birth and beauty.”

“ Oh, say no more, thou fascinating pleader! I can answer for Hubert as myself, no cloud shall ever rest upon our brow in the presence of lord Dunleer—we will remember nothing but his affection, his unfading friendship to our parents, his unceasing guardian care and kindness to ourselves.”

“ Thanks, kinsman, thanks!” gaily exclaimed Hammersley, endeavouring to flourish off with theatrical rant the sensibility which glowed on every feature; “ but short is the space allowed for glossing words, for I must relate my fairy le-

gend of the Grove ere I awake my guardian, and time wears apace.—When the Grove became the property of its present possessors, I was ordered by lord Dunleer to Cumberland: the old deaf gardener and his stupid wife made little opposition to my will; where eloquence failed, gold was an all-powerful, all-convincing argument; and I became, with little trouble, the self-allotted agent of lady Rosabel Melross, to make the alterations projected so many years before by the great-grandfather of lord Fitzauburne. A London architect, of great ability, met me, by the order of lord Dunleer, at the Grove; and our task was soon accomplished; a sufficient number of workmen were employed to make it seem almost the work of magic, our task was so speedily completed. The original plan of the late lord Coldbrook was exactly followed, except where a trifling deviation increased the scenic beauty.”

“ But tell me, dearest Hammersley,
“ how your guardian got possession of that
plan;

plan; my grandfather valued it so highly, that he made me promise, almost in his dying hour, that no eye should see, no hand receive it from me, till this, his long-cherished fancy, was about to be accomplished, which a magician told him would take place during my life, and darkly hinted—the plan was in itself a magic gift, a potent spell to further on his wishes.”

“ Lord Dunleer, then Hubert O’Niell, remained for many days disguised in the neighbourhood of Elmwood, and sketched that plan, coloured by a master’s hand, now in your lordship’s possession. The next time lord Coldbrook came to Devonshire, captain O’Niell assumed the magic robe, and gave the drawing into his hand, of which he retained an exact copy. Our work went on famously; but how to remove the wall, without our secret being discovered, equally puzzled the London architect and the wild Irishman; but the genius of Ireland finally prevailed. I ordered a wooden screen to be made, of

the same height and length as the park wall, painted and dashed to look exactly similar; and in the dead of night we placed it about four feet beyond the wall, in lord Coldbrook's park. The master's eye was wanting to detect the deception; all succeeded to our wishes, and at the midnight hour we removed, as we had placed, the screen. The deer, selected for their varied beauty by lord Dunleer, were given to range at large the wide-extended park, and vegetative vied with animated nature for pre-eminence in beauty. Before he left Ireland, lord Dunleer wrote to his northern friends, to inform them of the birth and parentage of Percy and his cousin; and ere you meet again, the benevolent laird, the lofty but noble-minded lady Sabina, will have withdrawn the curtain which concealed your proud and lordly ancestral bearing. But I can stay no longer to flourish in typical figurative language to your charmed ears, for I must to my lord Dunleer, my very worthy and
approved

approved good guardian; and remember, gallant Percy, I expect your promised sunny smile to greet the noble earl your uncle."

"Are you the only favoured mortal, Hammersley, allowed to enter the chamber of lord Dunleer? would his lordship deem it intrusion, if Hubert and I were your companions?"

"Not the least. Intrusion! no; it would bestow on his heart unqualified, delighted gratification;" then eagerly taking an arm of each, he hurried out of the room, his joyous countenance beaming with the pleasure he was so anxious to impart to the bosom of his guardian.

"What a noble-looking creature Hammersley is!" said lord Coldbrook; "noble in mind as form. With what sensitive care he avoided every unpleasant retrospection! yet in his promised explanation nothing was deficient."

The countenance of lord Dunleer, as he entered the room with his young companions,

panions, spoke a heart at peace with himself and all mankind.—“This too is thy work, heart-winning Hammersley,” said lord Coldbrook; “how justly, dearest Flora, is your cousin the idol of his family!”

“The spirit of impatience is very busy with you, Frank,” said lord Dunleer, as he observed him every second minute consulting his watch, and strapping from window to window; “you won’t see lady Honoria O’Dwyer these two hours.”

“Prophet of evil!” exclaimed the sportive Frank, “the maid I feel most anxious to behold approaches,” and he dashed out of the room, with a step as light and joyous as his heart.

“Happy Mr. Hammersley,” sighed Hubert O’Niell; the responsive sigh of major Pakenham confessed the disappointment both had experienced; they looked not for the kindred or the promised bride of Hammersley in the expected guests of lord Dunleer.

Hammersley soon returned, lady Sabina

na Lindsay leaning on his arm; Craig Roslin supported the timid steps of his beauteous daughter—of the modest, blushing, bonny Mabel. Lady Sabina hastily approached, took the hand of Hubert, and presented her glowing cheek.—“ Salute your cousin, Hubert O’Niell; we are no far-off kindred; my mother was a Hammersley, aunt to the late brave and gallant general; how could I doubt you were of gentle blood, my kinsman, when every action spoke the true nobility of soul? Forgive me, Percy; forgive your dotting mother, if she has first addressed your cousin. To you I never was deficient in courtly courtesy, but gave you rank for rank in equal lordly bearing; but my own kinsman, the preserver of my husband, the princely-descended Hubert, was treated in the castle hall of his own kinswoman—of Sabina Lindsay, as a far, far-off cousin—as a second-rated kinsman, while the youth of royal birth might have stood proudly foremost.”

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